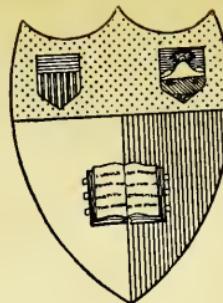




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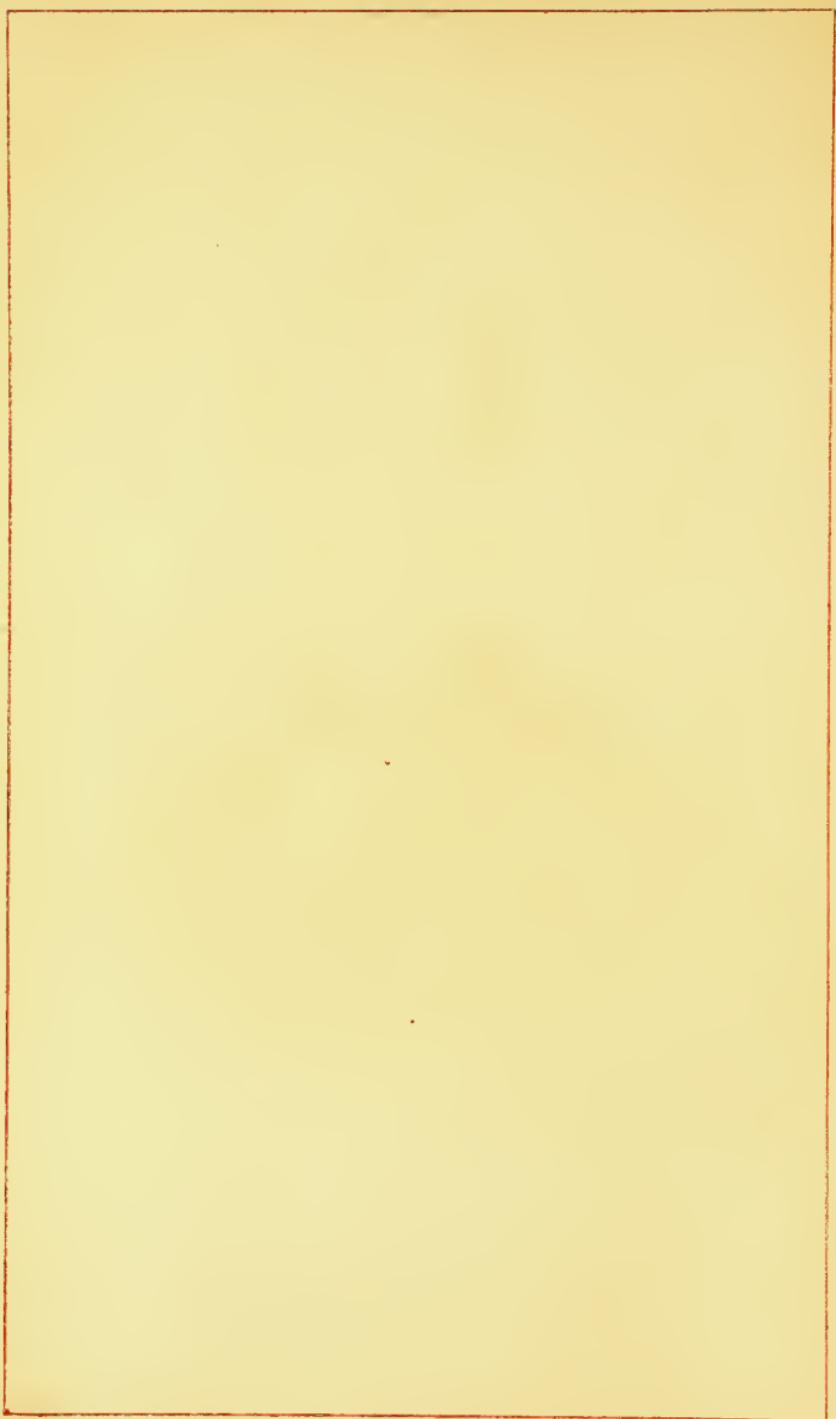
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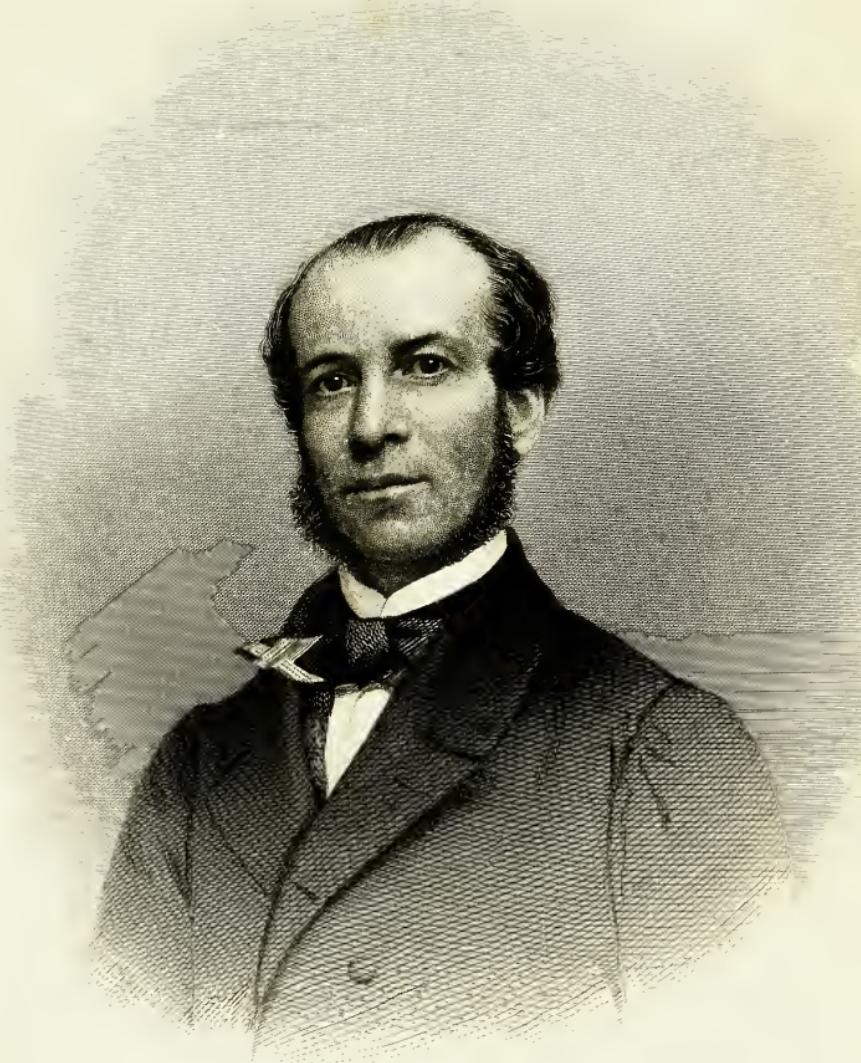
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Excursion among the Poets.





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AN

EXCURSION

AMONG

The Poets.

BY H. C. FOSTER, S. O. A.

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P R E F A C E.

THE influences which, during the last half century, have modified the rigor of the prevailing creeds of Christendom, have not been few nor fleeting. Theology has relaxed its grim features, and tacitly abandoned or put out of sight, one by one, tenets at variance with the advanced intelligence and religious sentiment of the age. The dogma of a divinely arranged atonement arbitrarily embracing a small portion of the human race, and consigning the rest, on account of their doctrinal unbelief, or vices of will, to everlasting perdition, is now rarely urged as an indispensable article of faith.

More harmonious views of the Deity and His dealings, and of the nature of Christ's mission, are becoming general. By many devout Chris-

tians it is believed, that, if there is to be punishment in another stage of being, it will be analogous to that which follows sin in this life, and with a remedial, not a vindictive object. By others it is held that Christ's atonement comprehended the entire race of man, and was final and unconditional.

The incompatibility of the old notion of a partial atonement with the present state of culture, moral and religious, among men, and the restlessness which a sense of that incompatibility produces in leading minds,—have been evinced in a marked manner of late in the publication of an ingenious work* by one of the foremost champions of the old theology, in which, in order to vindicate the ways of God to man, under the assumptions of that theology, he revives the ancient theory of pre-existent sin, which regards the human race as fallen spirits, to whom in this life an opportunity is afforded of expiating the guilt which they contracted in unknown eras of being. We will not pause upon the difficulties with which this fanciful scheme is crowded.

It is well known that the celebrated and evangelical John Foster held decided views in opposition to the belief in the eternal duration of future punishment; and, strange as it may appear, his

* *The Conflict of Ages*, by Edward Beecher, D. D.

standing and influence as an "orthodox" Christian and minister were not lost thereby. He writes, as late as 1841, on this subject: "I acknowledge my inability (I would say it reverently) to admit this belief, together with a belief in the Divine goodness,—the belief that *God is love*, that His tender mercies are over all His works." "What, then," he says, on another occasion, "shall we think of that theology, which represents the men, whom God has made most like Himself, as exulting for ever and ever in the most dreadful sufferings of the larger part of those who have been their fellow-inhabitants of this world?" Even Dr. Watts, a portion of whose writings justify us in regarding him as one of the most uncompromising expounders of the theology thus indicated, appears to have ultimately changed his views in regard to its most repulsive article. John Foster speaks of himself as being "in the same parallel of latitude with respect to orthodoxy as the revered Dr. Watts in the late maturity of his thoughts."

Some moralists have contended that nothing less than the fear of endless woe hereafter will deter men from sin in this life. But the piety induced and sustained by such a motive can have little of saving grace in its composition; and it may well be doubted whether such derogatory notions of the

Deity as the fear involves do not multiply believers less rapidly than scoffers,

The Poets have, with some exceptions, been in advance of the theologians in giving us ideas of Providence and a future life, consistent with the wants and analogies of our nature, and not at variance with the teachings of revelation. Poetry, from the time of Job, has been the mother tongue of devotion and prophecy ; and the poets, in their highest moods, have generally been true to those inmost assurances of the soul, which represent a God and an after life in keeping with our best ideas of omnipotent benignity and love. Poetry falters in its lofty and confident tone, and gives us for its winged words of inspiration a mere vulgar catalogue of horrors, when it would depict a material hell, or set forth the doctrine of everlasting perdition for any human soul. Even those poets who are regarded as theologically “orthodox” are often poetically heterodox ; for, at times, they seem to exult in their escape from their narrow sectarian enclosure—to have a clear glimpse of ~~this~~ all-embracing mercy of the universal Father—and to give utterance to a strain, breaking like a clarion’s voice through sounds of groaning and lamentation, and rebuking the gloomy creed, which the heart unerringly rejects, however the intellect,

succumbing to supposed authority, may labor to accept it. This fact, which no one who critically studies the religious poets can fail to recognize, will explain why, in this "Testimony of the Poets," contributions from Milton, Young, Montgomery, and even Watts, may be found.

Much that will be new to American readers is presented in this volume. In the "Sermons in Sonnets," by the Rev. Chauncey Hare Townshend, an esteemed clergyman of the established Church of England, the doctrine of Universal Salvation is set forth with the learning of the profound theologian, and the fervid eloquence of the true poet. The poems of Hartley Coleridge, Horace Smith, Leigh Hunt, Thomas Hood, John Sterling, P. J. Bailey, Charles Mackay, Mrs. Browning, and Mary Howitt, are no less decided in their tone in reference to this subject; and it will be found that Wordsworth, Southey, Keble, ~~Bernard~~ Barton, ~~Bewring~~, Wilson, and other poets of hardly inferior note, including several of American origin, have given utterance to sentiments which admit of but one construction, and that opposed to the theological interpretation of God and Scripture which would consign more than nine-tenths of every generation of men to everlasting anguish in another life.]

It will require but a casual glance to see that this is no sectarian book. It will have fulfilled its mission if it help to indicate that the highest human conceptions of the Beautiful and the True are in accordance with the faith which, in the spirit of Christ's teaching, can sincerely and consistently address the Omnipotent as "our Father," and which can look through death in the serene assurance that He "doeth all things well," and that justice will, in this and every future stage of being, be ever tempered with mercy.

INDEX OF AUTHORS.

ADDISON, JOSEPH,	333	DAVIES, SIR JOHN,	173
ADAMS, SARAH F.,	252	DE VERE,	293
AKENSIDE, MARK,	354	DODDRIDGE, PHILIP, . .	243
ALFORD, HENRY,	309		
ANGELO, MICHAEL,	316	ELLIOTT, EBENEZER, . .	343
ASHWORTH, C.,	300		
BAILEY, P. J.,	272	FRY, CAROLINE,	338
BARBAULD, ANNA L.,	220	FRITZ AND LEOLETT, . .	344
BARTON, BERNARD,	159	GERHARDT, P.,	312
BEATTIE, JAMES,	218	GILL, T. H.,	339, 352, 358
BLANCHARD, LAMAN, . .	317, 356	HAGEN, J.,	329
BOWRING, JOHN,	108	HARRIS, T. L.,	307
BRETON,	331	HEBER, REGINALD,	177
BROWNING, MRS. E. B., . .	182	HEMANS, FELICIA,	196
BRYANT, WM. C.,	167, 341	HERBERT, GEORGE,	319
BURNS, ROBERT,	235	HODGSON,	318
BUTCHER,	293	HOLMES, O. W.,	188
BYRON, LORD,	238	HOOD, THOMAS,	246
CAMPBELL, THOMAS,	225	HOWITT, MARY,	265
CAREY, ALICE,	313	HUNT, LEIGH,	143
CHATFIELD, DR.,	154		
COLERIDGE, HARTLEY, . .	65	KEBLE, JOHN,	336, 347, 355
COLERIDGE, S. T.,	77	KELLEY,	297
COWPER, WM.,	328, 349	KOSEGARTEN,	321
DAVY, SIR HUMPHRY, . . .	304	LAMARTINE, A. DE, . .	150, 335

INDEX OF AUTHORS.

LONGFELLOW, H. W., . . .	318	SMITH, HORACE, . . .	95
LOWELL, J. R., . . .	324	SOUTHEY, ROBERT, . . .	128
LYTTON, SIR E. B., . . .	157	SOUTHEY, MRS. C. B., . .	132
MACKAY, CHARLES, . . .	256	SPENSER, EDMUND, . . .	296
MAYO, MRS. S. E., . . .	299	STERLING, JOHN, . . .	91
MILNES, R. M., . . .	323	TAYLOR, JANE, . . .	320, 351
MILTON, JOHN, . . .	89	TENNYSON, ALFRED, . . .	116
MONTGOMERY, JAMES, . .	122	THOMSON, JAMES, . . .	169
MOORE, THOMAS, . . .	164	TOWNSHEND, CHAUNCEY H.,	23
NICOLL,	280	TRENCH, R. C., . . .	240
NORTON, ANDREWS, . . .	105	WATTS, ISAAC, . . .	345
PARNELL, THOMAS, . . .	209	WILLIS, N. P., . . .	332
POPE, ALEXANDER, . . .	191	WHITE, J. BLANCO, . . .	357
QUARLES, FRANCIS, . . .	244	WHITTIER, J. G., . . .	275
SARGENT, EPES, . . .	231	WILLIAMS, HELEN M., . .	327
SCHEFFER, LEOPOLD, . .	207	WILSON, JOHN, . . .	138
SHAKSPEARE, WM., . . .	199	WORDSWORTH, WM., . .	79
		YOUNG, EDWARD, . . .	200

CONTENTS.

	Page
INTRODUCTORY STANZAS,	<i>Editor,</i> 19
Sermons in Sonnets,	<i>Townshend,</i> 23-63
A Question and Answer,	<i>Id.,</i> 63
Wait,	<i>Id.,</i> 64
Regeneration,	<i>H. Coleridge,</i> 65
To a Child,	<i>Id.,</i> 66
To a Friend,	<i>Id.,</i> 67
Religious Differences,	<i>Id.,</i> 67
On a Friend's Death,	<i>Id.,</i> 68
The Word of God,	<i>Id.,</i> 69
Sonnets,	<i>Id.,</i> 70-75
Sense, if you can find it,	<i>Id.,</i> 76
Who Prayeth Best,	<i>S. T. Coleridge,</i> 77
Man Redeemable,	<i>Id.,</i> 78
Intimations of Immortality,	<i>Wordsworth,</i> 79
Faith by Virtue,	<i>Id.,</i> 83
The Responses of External Nature,	<i>Id.,</i> 84
Man never Irreclaimable,	<i>Id.,</i> 84
The Moral Law,	<i>Id.,</i> 85
Ode to Duty,	<i>Id.,</i> 86
The Soul's recuperative Energies,	<i>Id.,</i> 88

	Page
Spiritual Population of the Universe,	<i>Milton</i> , 89
On his Blindness,	<i>Id.</i> , 90
Virtue a Light to Herself,	<i>Id.</i> , 90
The Penitent,	<i>Sterling</i> , 91
Divine Discipline towards Man,	<i>Id.</i> , 92
The Soul Disciplined,	<i>Id.</i> , 94
The Perpetual Religion,	<i>Horace Smith</i> , 95
A Prayer,	<i>Id.</i> , 97
Quarrel of Faith, Hope, Charity,	<i>Id.</i> , 97
Moral Alchemy,	<i>Id.</i> , 101
The Heart's Sanctuary,	<i>Id.</i> , 104
The Departed Spirit,	<i>Andrews Norton</i> , 105
Submission,	<i>Id.</i> , 106
On a Friend's Death,	<i>Id.</i> , 107
Matins and Vespers,	<i>Bowring</i> , 108
Hymn,	<i>Id.</i> , 111
The Beauties of Creation,	<i>Id.</i> , 112
Undeveloped Good,	<i>Id.</i> , 113
Destiny of the Soul,	<i>Id.</i> , 114
From "In Memoriam,"	<i>Tennyson</i> , 116
Man Immortal,	<i>James Montgomery</i> , 122
To One in Affliction,	<i>Id.</i> , 123
De Profundis,	<i>Id.</i> , 124
The Soul's Immortal Origin,	<i>Id.</i> , 125
Forever with the Lord,	<i>Id.</i> , 126
The Dead Friend,	<i>Southey</i> , 128
Good the beginning, Good the end,	<i>Id.</i> , 130
There is a Tongue,	<i>Mrs. Southey</i> , 132
The Pauper's Death-bed,	<i>Id.</i> , 134
Life and Death,	<i>Id.</i> , 136
The Infant's Removal,	<i>Id.</i> , 137
Magdalene's Hymn,	<i>Wilson</i> , 138
Consolation from God's visible Works,	<i>Id.</i> , 140
Immortal Hopes,	<i>Id.</i> , 141

CONTENTS.

15

	Page
The Evening Cloud,	<i>Wilson</i> , 142
Reflections of a Soul on Death,	<i>Leigh Hunt</i> , 143
An Angel in the House,	<i>Id.</i> , 147
Abou Ben Adhem,	<i>Id.</i> , 148
The Road of Death,	<i>Id.</i> , 148
Providence,	<i>Id.</i> , 149
From "The Death of Socrates,"	<i>Lamartine</i> , 150
Musings in the Temple of Nature,	<i>Chatfield</i> , 154
Repose in Faith,	<i>Lytton</i> , 157
The Land no Mortal may know,	<i>Barton</i> , 159
Too Late,	<i>Id.</i> , 160
Faith, Hope, and Charity,	<i>Id.</i> , 161
Signs and Tokens,	<i>Id.</i> , 162
Farewell,	<i>Id.</i> , 162
Comfort in Affliction,	<i>Moore</i> , 164
But who shall see,	<i>Id.</i> , 165
Bliss of Heaven,	<i>Id.</i> , 166
The Return of Youth,	<i>Bryant</i> , 167
God's Universal Love,	<i>Thomson</i> , 169
Moral of the Seasons,	<i>Id.</i> , 171
The Soul's high Destiny,	<i>Davies</i> , 173
Reasons for Immortality,	<i>Id.</i> , 174
Affliction's Teachings,	<i>Id.</i> , 176
God Provideth for the Morrow,	<i>Heber</i> , 177
On the Death of a Brother,	<i>Id.</i> , 178
The Widow of Nain,	<i>Id.</i> , 179
What is Religion,	<i>Id.</i> , 180
Cowper's Grave,	<i>Mrs. Browning</i> , 182
Cheerfulness,	<i>Id.</i> , 186
God is Love,	<i>Holmes</i> , 188
Virtue the Sole Happiness,	<i>Pope</i> , 191
The Universal Prayer,	<i>Id.</i> , 193
A Dirge,	<i>Mrs. Hemans</i> , 196
The Lilies of the Field,	<i>Id.</i> , 197

	Page
The Birds of the Air,	<i>Mrs. Hemans,</i> 197
Angel Visits,	<i>Id.,</i> . . . 198
The Deathless Soul,	<i>Shakspeare,</i> . . . 199
From the "Night Thoughts,"	<i>Young,</i> 200
Capacity of Man for Progress,	<i>Scheffer,</i> 207
The Hermit,	<i>Parnell,</i> 209
Edwin's Meditations in Autumn,	<i>Beattie,</i> 218
An Address to the Deity,	<i>Mrs. Barbauld,</i> . . . 220
The Unknown God,	<i>Id.,</i> 223
The Hope of an Hereafter,	<i>Campbell,</i> 225
Mount Hope,	<i>Epes Sargent,</i> . . . 231
The Inner Law,	<i>Burns,</i> 235
Charity,	<i>Id.,</i> 236
A Prayer,	<i>Id.,</i> 237
The Immortal Mind,	<i>Lord Byron,</i> . . . 238
Couplets,	<i>Trench,</i> 240
Spring,	<i>Id.,</i> 242
Shortsightedness of Man,	<i>Id.,</i> 243
Trial before Reward,	<i>Quarles,</i> 244
The Bridge of Sighs,	<i>Hood,</i> 246
Farewell Life,	<i>Id.,</i> 250
Hope,	<i>Sarah F. Adams,</i> . . . 252
Faith in Divine Goodness,	<i>Id.,</i> 253
Nearer to Thee,	<i>Id.,</i> 254
The Child and the Mourners,	<i>Mackay,</i> 256
The Little Moles,	<i>Id.,</i> 258
Old Opinions,	<i>Id.,</i> 260
We are Wiser than we Know,	<i>Id.,</i> 262
Christmas Carol,	<i>Mary Howitt,</i> . . . 265
Man's Judgment,	<i>Id.,</i> 267
Rejoicing in Heaven,	<i>Id.,</i> 269
The Grave's Victor,	<i>Id.,</i> 270
Song of the Saints,	<i>P. J. Bailey,</i> . . . 272
Life's Ultimate Knowledge,	<i>Id.,</i> 273

CONTENTS.

17

	Page	
The Maiden's Prayer,	<i>P. J. Bailey</i> ,	274
Tauler,	<i>Whittier</i> ,	275
The Angel of Patience,	<i>Id.</i> ,	278
Lines in Prospect of Death,	<i>Nicoll</i> ,	280
Songs of Being,	<i>Anon.</i> ,	283
Where are the Dead,	<i>Anon.</i> ,	286
A Dream of Heaven,	<i>Anon.</i> ,	288
Thoughts for the Departed,	<i>Anon.</i> ,	290
The Happier Sphere,	<i>Anon.</i> ,	291
Hope's Brighter Shore,	<i>Anon.</i> ,	292
Forgiveness of Error,	<i>Butcher</i> ,	293
Conversion,	<i>De Vere</i> ,	293
The Stars,	<i>Anon.</i> ,	294
Angelic Ministry,	<i>Spenser</i> ,	296
God's Love Unchangeable,	<i>Kelley</i> ,	297
Judge Gently,	<i>Anon.</i> ,	297
Thou art not Lost,	<i>Anon.</i> ,	298
The Mission of Christ,	<i>Mrs. Mayo</i> ,	299
The Gospel's Promises,	<i>Ashworth</i> ,	300
A Walk in a Churchyard,	<i>Anon.</i> ,	301
Pupil and Tutor,	<i>Anon.</i> ,	303
Life's Discipline,	<i>Davy</i> ,	304
Wisdom,	<i>Anon.</i> ,	305
All Things are Yours,	<i>New</i> ,	306
The Heart of Unbelief,	<i>Harris</i> ,	307
The Dead,	<i>Alford</i> ,	309
Immortality,	<i>Anon.</i> ,	311
Christian Trust,	<i>Gerhardt</i> ,	312
Live and Help Live,	<i>Alice Carey</i> ,	313
Religious Casuistry,	<i>Anon.</i> ,	314
The Fountain of Grace,	<i>Angelo</i> ,	316
The Eloquent Pastor,	<i>Blanchard</i> ,	317
Universality of Redemption,	<i>Hodgson</i> ,	318
Blessed are the Dead,	<i>Longfellow</i> ,	318

	Page
Man ever Restless,	<i>Herbert</i> , 319
On the Death of an Infant,	<i>Jane Taylor</i> , 320
Via Crucis, Via Lucis,	<i>Kosegarten</i> , 321
My Times are in Thy Hand,	<i>Anon.</i> , 322
Fragments,	<i>Milnes</i> , 223
To the Dandelion,	<i>Lowell</i> , 324
The Law of Mercy,	<i>Anon.</i> , 326
Trust in Providence,	<i>Helen M. Williams</i> , 327
God's Purposes,	<i>Cowper</i> , 328
Nothing Good will Perish,	<i>Hagen</i> , 329
For I shall yet praise Him,	<i>Breton</i> , 331
The Present and Future,	<i>Willis</i> , 332
God's Mercies,	<i>Addison</i> , 333
The Cry of the Humble,	<i>Lamartine</i> , 335
The Book of Nature,	<i>Keble</i> , 336
Thy Kingdom Come,	<i>Anon.</i> , 337
Assurance of God's Love,	<i>Caroline Fry</i> , 338
The Unsearchable,	<i>Gill</i> , 339
The Future Life,	<i>Bryant</i> , 341
Not for Nought,	<i>Elliott</i> , 343
Faith,	<i>Fritz and Leolett</i> , 344
A Sight of Heaven in Sickness,	<i>Watts</i> , 345
For Help in Trouble,	<i>Anon.</i> , 346
The Lord's Chastening,	<i>Keble</i> , 347
Light amid Darkness,	<i>Cowper</i> , 349
Practical Devotion,	<i>Jane Taylor</i> , 351
Grace and Gratitude,	<i>Gill</i> , 352
The Soul's Reliance,	<i>Doddridge</i> , 354
Upward Tendencies of the Soul,	<i>Akenside</i> , 354
The Rainbow,	<i>Keble</i> , 355
Wisdom and Love,	<i>Bowring</i> , 356
To Night,	<i>J. Blanco White</i> , 357
Looking to Jesus,	<i>Gill</i> , 358
The Saviour of All,	<i>Editor</i> , 359

“All Souls are Mine.”

Ezekiel, xviii. 4.

ALL souls, O Lord, are Thine ;—assurance blest!—
Thine, not our own to rob of Help Divine ;
Not man’s, to doom by any human test,
But Thine, O gracious Lord, and only Thine !

Surely “the soul that sinneth, it shall die”—
Die to the sin that would its life confine !
Evil shall boast not perpetuity,
Since every soul, however fall’n, is Thine.

Thine, by thy various discipline, to lead
To heights where heavenly truths immortal shine ;—
Truths, none eternally shall fail to heed,
For all, O Lord, are Thine, forever Thine.

Forgive the thought, that everlasting ill
To any can be part of Thy design ;
Finite, imperfect, erring, guilty,— still
All souls, great God, are Thine,— and mercy Thine.

The soul, its own inquisitor, respects
No other claim save that Thy words enshrine ;
In its serene profundity reflects
No power beyond and over it save Thine.

And Poesy her voice accordant lends
When highest rapture wings her flight divine,
Notes of immortal cheer forever blends
With those proclaiming, Lord, all souls are Thine.

“ All souls are Mine ” ! Who shrinks to yield his breath,
Whose child-like faith can on those words recline ?
Come with thy scourges, Fate ! Come, Anguish, Death,—
Since God himself hath said ; “ All souls are Mine ” !

Excursion among the Poets.



Chauncey Hare Townshend.

SERMONS IN SONNETS.

I.

"The times of restitution of all things." *Acts*, iii. 21.

GIVE evil but an end—and all is clear !
Make it eternal—all things are obscured !
And all that we have thought, felt, wept, endured,
Worthless. We feel that ev'n if our own tear
Were wiped away for ever, no true cheer
Could to our yearning bosoms be secured
While we believed that sorrow clung uncured
To any being we on earth held dear.
Oh, much doth life the sweet solution want
Of all made blest in far futurity !
Heaven needs it too. Our bosoms yearn and pant
Rather indeed our God to justify
Than our own selves. Oh, why then drop the key
That tunes discordant worlds to harmony ?

II.

"Speak good of his name." *Psalm c. 4.*

OH no, great God ! We feel Thou canst not be
Spectator or upholder of distress,
So long, indeed, as it is objectless.
No ! it Thou look'st on sorrow, 'tis to see
Its benefit and end. If before Thee
One hopeless ill could spread the smallest shroud,
Oh, would'st Thou not dissolve it as a cloud
In the mere fervors of Thy radiancy ?
'Tis so ! And Thou Thy dearest Son didst send
That message of a boundless love to make ;
Not as a mockery — more the heart to rend,
If all were offered what but few could take !
Not as a thing of words — but as a meed,
Which, like Thyself, is Truth and Love indeed.

III.

* He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" *Romans, viii. 32.*

OH, not Thyself, great God, to satisfy
(Who in Thyself dost hold a full content),
Was Thy dear Son unto our being lent
To walk on earth, to suffer, and to die !
But 'twas to still the heart's own piercing cry
For Expiation. 'Twas divinely meant
To show which way Thy tender mercy went

When Thou createdst man — the remedy
For a disease which did thy pity move,
None 'scaping it — for none are good but Thou !
Oh, 'twas the crowning act of Thy dear love,
Supreme assurance, sent us from above,
That Thou would'st save, and with all joy endow
Thy children, trembling in their human sense
With dim mysterious warnings of offence.

IV.

"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." *St. John*, i. 14.

AND so Thou wert made man ! A visible sign
That Thou for ever didst by man mean well.
Made man Thou wert ; else how, Lord, could'st
Thou tell
How feels the human moulded from divine ?
What wars of being call for aid benign,
And dear indulgence ? What sad fears to quell,
Which make Thee — Thee ! Creator of a hell
Forged by our sinful selves when fears condign
Have blotted out Thy light. All this to know
By sad experience, Thou to man wert made ;
And in this word — of man — the whole is said,
All pain, all want, all fear, all forms of woe.
In thought eternal these now rest with Thee,
Thou took'st them on Thyself — but man is free !

V.

"We are chastened that we be not condemned." *1 Corinthians*, ii. 32.

YES, chastisement must be! -- only, instead
Of bitter vengeance, read corrective love.
Methinks this thought would more impress and
move,
And realizing influence o'er us shed,
Than all fantastic terrors, bigot-bred.
Souls by the just and true alone improve ;
And true it is, that ill acts from above
Draw down a retribution on the head ;
But stripes of vengeful wrath no bettering bring.
Only, when smitten by a Father's hand,
We kiss the rod of heavenly chastening,
That blossoms into joy like Aaron's wand.
Oh, then 'twere wise weak mortals to protect
From threats too horrible to take effect.

VI.

"Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God." *Romans*, ii. 22.

SEVERITY indeed true kindness is,
Inspired by love and wisdom. Never we,
Like the wronged child of a false charity,
Shall, in the next world, blame the Judge of
this,
Biting the hand which we pretend to kiss.

No ; for we feel that we are beings free,
Not fettered by weak love, nor tyranny ;
Nor can we say that God hath dealt amiss,
When sufferings reach us from the depths of sin.
Mortals we may suspect, who frown on us
For their own pleasure, or who mine within
Our sterner soul by flatteries dangerous.
But God, we know, hath not a selfish end.
Smiling, or frowning, still He must befriend.

VII.

"He shall send them a saviour." *Isaiah*, xix. 20.

SAVIOUR ! There is a beauty in the name !
Who wants not saving from some ill of life ?
Who has not felt the torture and the strife
Of guilt or sorrow bounding through the frame ?
Who has not seen some cloud of fear or shame
Hang in his atmosphere, with threatenings rife ?
Or of keen Death the ready-whetted knife
Towards his heart trembling ? — Then, in woes the
same,
Men should be one in faith. O brotherhood
Of sorrow, wherefore darken by a ban
Of bigot cruelty, or cry for blood,
The word which should be sorrow's talisman ?
Let me at least feel this, deep, deep within,
If from naught else, Thou, Saviour, sav'st from sin !

VIII.

"And his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel." *Judges*, x. 16.

ART Thou a cold Abstraction, O Thou Source
Of sweet affections, human tenderness ;
When we are yearning with a deep distress,
Feel'st Thou not ? Can no sorrow, no re-
morse,
Touch Thee with somewhat of a kindred force ?
Oh, dost Thou never grieve that we are less —
Less perfect than Thyself, by the mere stress
Of a rude nature, which, with devious course,
Must run from Thee, that it may duly keep
An individual will, and learn to choose
The good way of itself ? Canst Thou refuse
Thy sympathy for needs so sad and deep ?
Thou canst not, dost not ! — Sure our hearts may be
That, when we harm ourselves, we sorrow Thee.

IX.

" Upholding all things by the word of his power." *Hebrews*, i. 3.

SINCE all things are, O God, upheld by Thee,
And Thou canst never quite withdraw Thyself
From any work of Thine, else o'er the shelf
Of being it would fall, and nothing be, —
Canst Thou uphold an endless misery ?
Canst Thou for ever feed the ravening wolf,
Remorse ; gaze ever on Hell's boiling gulf ?

That were indeed a dread eternity !
But, no ! Even we, who over judgment-halls
Riot, and hold unfeeling festivals,
Would crush an insect writhing at our feet
To put it out of pain. Oh, then, 'tis sure
If Thou, to make some mighty scheme com-
plete,
Permittest Ill to live — Thou know'st the cure.

X.

"Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb ? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." *Isaiah, xlix. 15.*

THE thought that any should have endless woe
Would cast a shadow on the throne of God,
And darken Heaven. . . From the scarce-warm
clod
To Seraphs, all Him as a Father know ;
He, all as children. Even with us below
The one rebellious son more thought and love
Than all the rest will in a parent move,
God stirring in us. Then how strong the glow
Of God's great heart our sorrows to relieve !
Could He be blest, beholding sufferings,
And not their end ? His tenderness would grieve
If even the least of His created things
Should miss of joy. In its serenity
God's present happiness proves ours to be.

XI.

"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." *St. John, xiii. 34.*

MEN do indeed paint Human Justice blind,
Through bandaged sight ; and truly. But the day
Is coming, when the fillet snatched away
Shall give her eyes with equitable mind
On her own scales to gaze, and for mankind
To poise them rightly. Then by clearer ray
Will she her study-book — man's soul — survey ;
And Christ's great law upon her frontlet bind.
Now, ignorant of Nature as of God,
Not yet we learn that terrors ne'er deter,
But harden and attract. That the brute rod
Makes rebels, but not children. That all fear
Instruction mars. That mortals to amend,
First we must show ourselves indeed their friend.

XII.

"Therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you." *Isaiah, xxx. 18.*

WHY through the scheme of God doth vengeance
roll ?
Because, alas, men know too well the word ! —
Because it like a trumpet's note is heard,
Waking no doubtful echo in the soul ! —
Because we are, in truth, most apt to stroll
In doubtful ways : — and to the common herd

The scourge is needful ! — Nor, indeed, were stirred
Longings within us for a heavenly goal,
Without opposing shades of pain and fear.
Yet in the Bible are there sayings dear,
Where God's great love, as if to make a path
Direct unto our apprehensions dull,
Dropping the garment of a dusky wrath,
Stands forth in naked mercy beautiful.

XIII.

" O, speak good of the Lord, all ye works of his, in all places of his dominions." *Psalm ciii. 22.*

ANSWER, with all thy pulses, throb and speak,
Thou tender, palpitating heart of God !
Through earth, through air, and caves of ocean broad,
All thronged with myriad beings, strong or weak
In terror, or deep love ! Flush on the cheek
Of morn, breathe sweet from evening's dewy sod !
Tremble in music, 'mid the choral ode
That from the soft vale to the mountain peak
Whispers or thunders ! — Art Thou cold, or dead,
Or vengeful ? — Hush ! A holy silence reigns :
That our own heart, stilling our throbbing veins,
And only with its own assurance fed,
May be itself Thy answer and abode,
O tender, palpitating heart of God !

XIV.

"In my Father's house are many mansions." *St. John, xiv. 2.*

YE orbs that tremble through infinity,
And are ye, then, linked only with our eyes,
Dissevered from our thoughts, our smiles, our sighs,—
Our hopes and dreams of being, yet to be ?
Oh, if all nature be a harmony
(As sure it is), why in those solemn skies
Should ye our vision mock, like glittering lies
To man all unrelated ? Must I see
Your glories only as a tinselled waste ?
If so, I half despise your spectacle !
But, if I deem that ye form æras vast,
And do, by mighty revolution, tell
Time to intelligent existences ;
Awe-struck, I do assist at your solemnities !

XV.

"All things serve thee." *Psalm cxix. 91.*

THEE all things serve. Then even the spirits bad
Which, felt or feigned, are round us. They too serve
Thy high behests, and work on brain or nerve,
Only as Thou decreest. Tidings how glad
To those whom unseen influences make mad
With ignorance ! Whom images of fear,
And terrors whispered into childhood's ear,
Distract with gloom that Nature ne'er had had
Unspoiled by man Oh, blest it is to hear

That there is purpose in our every pain ;
That we are not a sport and mockery,
Whereon an evil host their skill may try
For base experiment ; but children dear
Of a wise God, whose very frowns are gain.

XVI.

"Who is he that condemneth ? It is Christ that died." *Romans*, viii. 24.

PERCHANCE I whisper to my happy soul,
" Thought of past sin should burthen on thee lay,
And send thee weeping on a dreary way,
And self-abased." . . But then, beyond control
Of such mistrust, new pleasures still unroll
Their calm sweet glories to the visual ray
Of inward faith ; and heavenly voices say
Unto my spirit, " Joy is the great pole
Of thy existence. Not as mortals do
The Saviour doth : He raiseth from the ground
The crushed one, and restores from every wound
The self-respect of man. No friend untrue
Is He, with past offence to make thee sad.
Smiles He ? Thou canst not choose but to be glad."

XVII.

"The poor shall never cease out of the land." *Deuteronomy*, xv. 11.

HAD all a joy within, what outward ill
Could touch ? This, this alone, the cure
Of all the pangs that mortals must endure ;

Not in the dreams of bliss impossible
To our condition. 'Tis the evil Will
That forms an inward hideous portraiture
Of God. And while our darkened breasts imnure
This falsehood, all the riches, that could fill
The world with blessings equal as the day,
Were vain to clear one discontented brow,
Or dignify one sorrow. Give away
Thy very cloak — 'tis well! — but think not thou
Aught less than Christ acknowledged can absorb
The wants, the tears, of this distracted orb.

XVIII.

"God gave Solomon largeness of heart." *1 Kings.* iv. 29.

LARGENESS of heart! Inestimable gift!
Sure all that trust in Christ — Creation's Morn —
Must unto thee expand and be reborn,
However stinted by their nature's thrift.
For God's great Spirit doth exalt, and lift
The soul out of itself; far from forlorn
And personal narrowness, and all weak scorn
Of any who along life's current drift.
Thus much is sure. — He, who conceived the thought,
For angels — men — ay, even worms — to die,
That all Creation might be raised and brought
Out of its own inherent frailty,
Dwells not in bosoms that would Heaven repress
Unto their own exclusive narrowness.

XIX.

"What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." *Acts, x. 15.*

BENOLD men's judgments ! Common and unclean
We call whatever with our pride doth jar,
Though from one God and Father all things are.
Behold men's judgments ! The deep truth unseen,
Rash we decide what mere externals mean.
Know'st thou, while thy proud eye is closed afar,
In what mean worm God may illume a star ?
Know'st thou where His great Spirit dwells serene ?
Thon dost not. What thy pride may worthless deem,
Ay, tainted with pollution, may become,
Raised from the dust, the fairest, loveliest home
Where radiant Deity can shrine its beam ;
May be redeemed from Nature's common blot,
Ay, though perhaps thy very self be not !

XX.

"His hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him."
Genesis, xvi. 12.

OH, woe for those, and pity more than woe,
Who in the gulf of men's opinion sink ! —
Every man's hand against them, as they think,
What marvel their own hand, nor slack nor slow,
Should against every man remorseless go ?
Oh, could one snatch them from the dreary brink
Of the true hell — to feel themselves no link

In God's great scheme — *that* were a joy to know.
Ye who can find no shelter, homeless poor !
Ye wicked, who were never taught to pray !
Ay, even ye who from the better way
Turn wilful (therefore to be pitied more) !
Sure ye are men, for you still Christ did die,
And Hope were your divinest remedy !

XXI.

"But thou saidst, There is no hope." *Jeremiah*, ii. 25.

WITHOUT a hope is no activity,
No motive that exalts to bettering,
No life. There is no other breeze to fling
One ripple over Being's stagnant sea !
If life be precious, then should hope too be !
And if to make a soul with conscious wing
Of thought and will, a heart where love may cling
Be Heaven's first work, then Man's first villainy
Must be to murder hope ! Yet 'tis a crime
Acted in awful silence every day
When we from sin or sorrow turn away,
Or tell our bosoms 'tis no longer time
For penitence. Yet hear this truth, o'erawed,
To say there is no hope, expunges God !

XXII.

"The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." *St. James's Epistle*, i. 20.

MAN, though thou makest this world dark and rude,
By blotting out sweet hope, life's vital part,
Thou canst not reach the river's bounteous heart,
That pulses in the mountain solitude !
With life, hope, love, Heaven is not less imbued
Because thou play'st the churl with niggard art,
Hiding th' Almighty ! He to view will start
When least thou deem'st His mercy will intrude.
No measure art thou of th' Eternal Mind !
Yet sad it is we should let any die
Despairing, or blaspheming ! — Oh, be kind
As Christ ! His new law bars that any lie
Death-doomed. Didst thou observe His generous rule,
Then were each prison-house a noble school !

XXIII.

"And he taught daily in the temple." *St. Luke*, xix. 47.

THOUGH the free circuit of the silent air
Oft saw the worship of the Son of God,
Some rock His pulpit ; yet His steps, too, trod
The temple's pavement. Daily His repair
Was to the shrine where dwelt God's honour fair ,

And there He taught ; and, from that dread abode
Driving unhallowed things with scourge and rod.
Called it His Father's House — a House of Prayer.
Accept both lessons, Man ! God's love is free,
Is universal as pervading Heaven ;
Yet be fair temples to His worship given,
The best our hands can offer.— And trust, ye
Who turn His gifts unto the Giver's praise,
His smile hath prompted and will bless your ways.

XXIV.

"None that trust in him shall be desolate." *Psalm xxxiv. 22.*

DISTRUST is that which makes the curse of life.
Oh, if we trusted God, what ills were spared !
The feeling of the outcast makes us hard,
And fierce — and places in our hand the knife !
Did man trust man, what desolating strife
Of fiery thought we back from us should ward !
Sweet Faith would be our fortress and our guard
From every anguish with which souls are rife.
And so the Book of God makes all sin light
Weighed with distrust — the giant ill of man :
Our happiness commanding — under ban
Placing whatever dims the soul with blight ;
It whispers still unto our troubled sense,
Heaven wouldst thou know ? Heaven's charm is con-
fidence !

XXV.

"There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." *Acts, iv. 12.*

NATURE's defect, the ground-work of our woe,
Shadowed in all religions grandly forth,
We find — from the rude Sagas of the north,
To the high visions bright with India's glow.
This, then, as knowledge which ourselves do know
Too sadly — this is not the boon to earth
Which makes the Bible so divinely worth,
Or Thou didst come, O Saviour, to bestow !
'Tis the dear love, that, pointing the disease,
Doth also whisper of the remedy ;
'Tis the high gift of all that best agrees
With our soiled nature and its sovereign cry,
Forgiveness — restoration — means to rise
Out of ourselves. — And these Christ's Word alone
supplies.

XXVI.

"The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." *St. Mark, ii. 27.*

I LOVE thee, Day of God ! If rather not
We christen thee, with Christ, the Day of Man !
And thee as offspring of our nature scan,
The very need and yearning of our lot —
That, once in seven days, our toil forgot,

We rest ; not only the tired artisan,
But all who keep our being's healthful plan,
Lest mind or body overstrained we blot.
When shall we learn that God for His own sake
Nothing commands ? that arbitrary powers
Dwell not in Him ? that all the gain is ours
When He an ordinance for man doth make :
Chief when He tells us that, one day in seven,
We need a foretaste of our rest in Heaven ?

XXVII.

"Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free." *Galatians, v. 1.*

ARE we beneath the Law of Liberty,
Or old Judean bondage ? Has the Son
Of God in vain for us the chains undone
That bound us to our nature's slavery ?
To pant and strive, yet never once be free ;
To labor, as in dreams, at deeds begun
But never ended ; all that fancy won
To see dissolved in airy vacancy —
Is this to last for ever ? Shame, oh shame !
So much of beauty that we will not seize
Upbraids us. When, as now, our thwarted aim
Turns back God's remedies to our disease
Again — when broken is the loveliest charm
Of all our toiling days — when Sabbaths harm !

XXVIII.

"Which of you shall have an ass, or an ox, fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day?" *St. Luke, xiv. 5.*

WISDOM profound! But do we know it yet!
Alas, beneath our dread of Sabbath-works
Of love and need, a dread deception lurks,
And makes a mischief of a benefit!
What would Christ say, if now His feet were set
Again on earth? He, who from mercy's debt,
Ev'n to an ox or ass, absolved not man
By Sabbath-law? How would He clear His plan
Unto our eyes? now, when our hearts forget
All that we owe our fellow-beings — Love,
And care for all; — Love, that all care bestows
That none shall suffer by a day's repose,
And setteth human welfare far above
The pre-conceived notions we can bring
To force God's Book to our interpreting.

XXIX.

"It pleased the Father by him to reconcile all things unto himself, whether things on earth or things in heaven." *Colossians, i. 19, 20.*

WHERE spreads not Thy dominion, Saviour dear?
Where is not Thy salvation's glory thrown?
In heaven Thou wert — to earth Thou camest down —
Hell was dissolved before Thee. The vast tear

Of all creation Thou away didst clear,
And turn to music the tremendous groan
And travail of the birth that's laid upon
Whatever is not God ! . . Thrilled out of fear,
The air by Thee was touched with rapture's glow !
At the brightness of Thy presence Earth did move
Her burthens to cast off — and put on love !
The sea saw that, and fled from her deep woe.
Heaven laughed, and glittered, as if fresh with morn ;
God gave a glorious smile — and Hope was born !

XXX.

"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God." *Ephesians*, iv. 30.

EARTH'S giants, to be strong, must touch the Earth, —
Heaven's children must grasp Heaven ! Forfeit not
The high prerogative of thy great lot,
Thou soul, that once hast ta'en from Christ thy
birth !

Sensual delights not only will make dearth
Within thee ; but thy tender God forgot
Will grieve, because thou form'st a thoughtless plot
To mar creation's end — thy joy and mirth.
Oh, say, what threatening of a wrath to come
Can move thee like thy own upbraiding heart
Whispering — thou hast returned upon thy doom
To pierce thy Saviour with a newer dart.
Ingratitude ! that word Heaven's self might dim !
God means thee well — wilt thou mean ill to Him !

XXXI.

"Marvel not that I said, Ye must be born again." *St. John*, iii. 7.

BORN out of God, with pain and bitter tears,
Back unto God we must be born again,
Also with struggle and reluctant pain !
Our mortal days are types of greater years ;
And all that to our body's eye appears
In this great universe of loss and gain
Shadows our inner life, and is a chain
That ever linketh us by hopes and fears —
By Terror and by Trust — by Life and Death —
With grandeur. All this world is but a womb
Unto another. As we draw our breath,
We weep as infants do when first they come
Into this orb. So strive we in our thirst
To drink Heaven's air, which pains us at the first.

XXXII.

"His banner over me was love." *Cant.* ii. 4.

HE who loves best knows most. Then why should I
Let my tired thoughts so far, so restless run,
In quest of knowledge underneath the sun,
Or round about the wide-encircling sky !
Nor earth nor heaven is read by scrutiny !
But touch me with a Saviour's love divine,
I pierce at once to wisdom's inner shrine,

And my soul seeth all things like an eye.
Then have I treasures, which to fence and heed
Makes weakness bold and folly wisdom-strung,
As doves are valorous to guard their young,
And larks are wary from their nests to lead.
Is there a riddle, and resolved you need it?
Love — only love — and you are sure to read it!

XXXIII.

"Perfect love casteth out fear." *1 John*, iv. 18.

SEEST thou with dread creation's mystery ?
Dost thou life's drear enigma beat in vain ?
Hast thou a cloud upon thy heart and brain ?
Love — only love — and all resolved shall be !
Art thou a fool in this world's subtlety ?
Must thou thy fond belief still rue with pain
In all thy fancy deemed was joy and gain ?
Love — only love — and wisdom comes to thee ?
But, mind, thy love must be a heavenly fire :
For flames, from any earthly shrine ascending,
Kindled in vanity, in woe expire,
And leave experience o'er but ashes bending.
Then, too, the fear of God's avenging rod
Can only be escaped by loving God !

XXXIV.

"I will purely purge away thy dross." *Isaiah*, i. 25.

OUR sins from fire a dreadful emblem make
Of punishment, and woes that never tire:—
And yet how friendly — beautiful is fire !
Truth, dressed in fable, tells us it did wake
Man from brute sleep, Heaven's bounty to partake,
And arts, and love, and rapture of the lyre.
The cottage hearth, the taper's friendly spire,
Have images to soften hearts that ache.
Virtuous is fire. The stars give thoughts of love,
And the sun chaseth ill desires away.
Fire cleanses too ; by it we gold do prove,
And precious silver hath its bright assay.
Why then not deem the Bible's fires mean this —
Evil all melted, to make way for bliss ?

XXXV.

"What is truth?" *St. John*, xviii. 38.

Oh, how we pine for truth ! for something more
Than husks of learning ! How did ancient Greece
Hang on the virtuous lips of Socrates,
Turning from words more sounding to adore
The wisdom that sent souls to their own store

For knowledge. So let us our hearts release !
'Tis time the jargon of the schools should cease —
Errors that rot Theology's deep core,
Lying at the base of things. Down, down must fall
The glittering edifice, cemented much
With blood, yet baseless. At Truth's simple touch
All the vain fabric will be shattered — all !
But not the Bible ! Nature there is stored,
And God ! Eternal is the Saviour's Word !

XXXVI.

"Lord, to whom shall we go ?" *St. John*, vi. 68.

To whom, or whither, should we go from Thee,
O Christ ? Beyond ourselves, beyond all law
Of hope, and being ; beyond love and awe ;
Beyond creation — to some shoreless sea, —
To one huge blot of dreary vacancy ?
I look around, above, below ; I draw
On stores that sensual vision never saw —
I ransack piles of old philosophy !
Nothing I find, except the self-same thing,
One deep expression of tremendous want,
Nothing that even pretends to seal the grant
That to the heart's great void shall fulness bring !
Then, Saviour, I sink back before Thy knee,
And all things find in Thee, and only Thee !

XXXVII.

"All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him." *Ezekiel, xviii. 22.*

O WATERS of Oblivion, Fable fair
When back across the Past with throbbing brain
In thought we journey, thou dost mock our pain,
Like the false fountains on a desert's glare !
Our fancy grasps thee, though thou be but air,
And bitter the heart's cry, " In vain ! in vain !"
Oh then, if Heaven should whisper, " Seek again !
And thou may'st yet to real brooks repair ;
Stretch thy faint limbs, and wander or repose
By the green pasture and the cooling stream,
Dissolving quite the memory of thy woes
In present ecstasy." The hope and dream
Of such delight might make the desert bloom !
What then, if it be true, this side the tomb ?

XXXVIII.

"The sting of death is sin." *1 Corinthians, xv. 56.*

"OH, Death will be so beautiful !" one said
To me ; a child he was by sickness worn ; —
I looked at him. His face was like the morn
When from its beauty the dull vapors glide !
The dusky curtains that the next world hide
Seemed for a moment's space asunder torn !

“ My Saviour loves me ! ” Yet again he sighed,
And upward gazed with eye beatified ; —
That look with him unto the grave was borne !
Oh, could we smile into the next world too !
Why not ? O bounteous Nature, bounteous Grace,
If Death be dread, 'tis we who make it so,
Straying alike from God and Nature's face.
Two lovely roads lead to our common rest —
Forgiveness, Innocence — and both are best !

XXXIX.

“ Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.” *St. Luke, xviii. 17.*

THE sting of death doth neither fright the worm
That spins itself in peace a silken tomb,
Nor the forgiven child. Death is life's womb.
O'er life, o'er death, alike we spread the storm,
By straying from our being's simple form.
Bright are our natural faculties in bloom
Of childhood ; free from terror and from gloom
Is our life's year when in its tender germ.
The little child hath never doubt of God !
Ay, even the ploughman is more near to Heaven
Who feels our nature's want to be forgiven
(As childlike more) than he who with a load
Of sin and learning, Pride's rebellious son,
Hating old age and death, unto the grave toils on !

XL.

"In returning and rest shall ye be saved." *Isaiah, xxx. 15.*

YES ! There are hearts that, when I am no more,
Will love my verse ! It to their hearts will creep
Like music they have longed for, still and deep,
Loosing those chains that brain and bosom o'er
Are wove by Terrors haunting death's dread shore,
And Doubts that ask why here we toil and weep,
Scarce knowing why we came into this sleep
Called Life. A spirit from my strain will pour,
Whispering, that God is good and Nature kind,
And that our struggles make our agony :
And that to rest beneath the steadfast eye
Of God, and sit in holy stillness shrined,
Turns all things into calm reality,
And taketh all the burthen from the mind.

XLI.

"The law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good." *Romans, vii. 12.*

WHAT are the laws of God ? Our being they,
The true expression of our health and joy.
No arbitrary phrases they employ ;
No prohibitions fertile to betray.
'Tis true that, if transgressed, they bring alway
A penalty ; but pleasure's broken toy
Yields wisdom wrought from sorrow and annoy,
Warning us back to nature's happy way ;
And pain is not so much a punishment,

As a great lesson we must learn or die !
Thou hast no tortures in thy treasury,
O God, but medicines kind and prevalent
To soothe or heal, when we ungenerous
Have sinned against ourselves and Thee in us.

XLII.

"Now is the accepted time." *2 Corinthians*, vi. 2.

PRESS on our foreheads Thy salvation-seal
Now, now, O dear Redeemer of the world !
Lest, when Thy glorious standard be unfurled,
In Thy great day, we should but anguish feel
And shame ; lest light should all our sins reveal
To all creation ; and, by anguish whirled,
We from Thy glorious presence should be hurled
To lower grades of being ! With glad zeal,
Oh, let us now ourselves by Thee restore ;
Accept Thy covenant and Thy marriage dress,
Lest deep ingratitude should sink us more
Even than our sins, to sorrows measureless !
Which shall we do — be human or divine ?
Stand by our merits, or accept of Thine ?

XLIII.

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be." *First Epistle of St. John*, iii. 2.

WE cannot know, indeed, how much were lost
By present negligence ; but this we know,
That in our exit from this world of woe,

It is the next step that concerns us most!
The dream of torture and the wailing ghost
Are nothing ; but to fall ourselves below,
To be more exiled from our God than now,
Were horrible ! Oh, what a fearful coast
It were to land on, peopled by dark souls ;
Many, yet lonely,— by communion worse,—
Stranded upon creation's outcast shoals,
The dregs and refuse of the universe !
Whose pain were to behold, both near and far,
God as he is, ourselves too as we are !

XLIV.

"With destruction from the presence of the Lord." 2 *Thessalonians*, i. 9.

SAY, dost thou know what one sad moment were,
That were of God deprivéd utterly ?
Hast thou been sick in spirit, bound, yet free,
To let thy fancies riot in despair ?
Hast thou so breathed an unsubstantial air,
As, like a ghastly dream, the world to see,
To lose the sense of great reality ;
Unto the land of madness to repair,
Keeping thy consciousness ? Then hence divine,
What were whole cycles of such banishment ;
And think each moment worse than idly spent,
That does not draw thee nearer to the shrine
Whence only pleasure flows, where dwelleth He
Who only makes Life, Love, Reality !

XLV.

"Thy mercy is greater than the heavens." *Psalm cviii. 4*

O GREATER than the heavens Thy mercy is,
God, for it doth include the universe !
There is with Thee no anger and no curse !
Nor was — even then when man first did amiss !
Even then Thy love and truth did meet and kiss.
Thy boundless love no boon imperfect gave,
Nor did create till it decreed to save,
And wrap existence in eternal bliss !
But we, who take a portion for the whole
Of Thy great plan ; who, in our narrow range,
Scarce our conceptions bring to the next change
Of being ; how shall we Thy scheme unroll,
Which goes through cycles, working endlessly
Back from sin's dreary nothing unto Thee !

XLVI.

"All things work together for good to them that love God." *Romans, viii. 28.*

OH, what a load of struggle and distress
Falls off before the Cross ! The feverish care ;
The wish that we were other than we are ;
The sick regrets ; the yearnings numberless ;
The thought, "this might have been," so apt to press
On the reluctant soul ; even past despair,
Past sin itself, — all — all is turned to fair
Ay, to a scheme of ordered happiness,
So soon as we love God, or rather know

That God loves us ! . . Accepting the great pledge
Of His concern for all our wants and woe,
We cease to tremble upon danger's edge ;
While varying troubles form and burst anew,
Safe in a Father's arms, we smile as infants do !

XLVII.

" Nevertheless, though I am sometime afraid, yet put I my trust in thee." *Psalm lvi. 3.*

FORSAKE me not ! Oh, if Thou could'st indeed,
For me were blotted out earth, sea, and sky !
Give me Thyself, what canst Thou then deny ?
Thyself, if Thou deny me, all is need !
Without Thee, I am but a worthless weed
Fit to be thrown away. But Thou be nigh,
And flowers, and fruit, and festal luxury,
Unto my drooping and my dearth succeed.
My God, forgive these seeming doubts of Thee !
I play with language, but I feel no fears !
To me Thy faithfulness so true appears,
My very sins have no alarm for me.
Not like the world, disheriting its child,
Dost Thou prove fickle, where Thou once hast smiled.

XLVIII.

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." *Hebrews, xiii. 8.*

I KNOW that Thou wilt love me without end,
Saviour ; that nought Thy fixéd Truth can shake ;
That Thou my woes wilt soften and partake,

Though every love were far and every friend ;
That Thou through every danger wilt defend,
And of my heart a fencéd garden make,
Where evil scarce may enter, for Thy sake.
So on Thy changeless Word do I depend,
As on a mother the most trusting child ;—
And thus in Thee my being I ensphere,
Beyond the reach of earthly tempests wild.
I only rest, while round me all doth move,
And pillow all my heart upon Thy love.

XLIX.

"A law unto themselves." *Romans*, ii. 14.

OH, who can doubt with man Thy Spirit strove,
Out of the pale even of Thy chosen race ;
Wherever struggling from the vile and base
There shone a spark of beauty and bright love ?
But most where thirst of knowledge deep did move —
Knowledge of what we are, whither we pace
Along life's darkling road — how best to brace
Our nature to a height itself above !
And so, by souls half-touched with prophet-fire
(Not wholly — to make known what faults remain
Where Thou didst not bestow Thyself entire —),
The path for Thy great Advent was made plain ;
And mortals, who on Plato's words had hung,
Were thus prepared to hear a wiser tongue.

L.

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law." *Galatians*, iii. 13.

How slavish is the fear that ties the tongue,
When we would sing of free-redeeming grace,
Lest men should deem we leave the law no place,
And should be reckoned libertines among !
Yes ! Libertines are we ! The weight that hung
Upon our souls, a bondage dull and base,
Now leaves no blush upon our clearéd face.
What matters us men's judgments ? We have flung
Away all thought but this — that sin we hate
Because it bars us from our only joy —
From Thee, dear Lord ! What Thou cam'st to destroy
That we rebuild not ; whether the dull state
Of old tyrannic law, or tyrant sin :
We cast all from us, only Thee to win.

LL.

"In thy presence is fulness of joy." *Psalm* xvi. 11.

EACH day, O Lord, in this poor mode of mine,
I strive to paint Thee better to my heart,
That it may love Thee more. What if I start
Sometimes at shadows that obscure Thy shrine,
Dim earthly vapours breathed o'er light divine,
Wrought into spectral shapes by Fear's bad art,
Even to the acting of so dread a part
As that of Hindoo deities which twine
Into one form of horror. . . Yet not long

I mar Thy goodness by a dream like this.
I see Thee in all beauty, in all bliss ;
In light, and loveliness, and poet's song.
Thus much at least I know : from out Thy store
Of joy, the more I take, I find the more.

LII.

"Weep not." *St. Luke, xxiii. 28.*

WEEP not ! Oh, earth is nothing worth a tear.
Weep not ! Thy sorrow far too precious is
To be poured out on worldly vanities !
If Disappointment frown on thee severe,
Weep not ! Be sure a heavenly good is near,
And thy wish gained had teemed with miseries.
Hast thou been martyred by the agonies
Of a heart broken o'er a loved one's bier ?
Weep not ! Oh, less than ever weep thou then,
Deeming thy treasure gone beyond earth's woe.
Weep not ! for God doth love thee ! — Only when
Him thou hast grieved, allow thy grief to flow ;
Like some fond cruse of tears a tomb within,
Bury thy shrinéd sorrow with thy sin.

LIII.

" If ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed and be thou cast into the sea,
it shall be done." *St. Matthew, xxvi. 21.*

MOUNTAINS of sin from off my panting breast
Were at Thy word removed. There came a faith,
Into my soul, more strong than woe or death ;

Yet lay I weaker than an infant's rest
Beneath thine eye. The agony, that prest
Erewhile my brain, I felt had been the breath
That even in its torture quickeneth,
And of my sorrow I had gained the west
To rise on other worlds. . . Oh miracle !
What were Olympus, crumbled in the sea,
Unto the heaps of anguish moved from me ;
And in Thy love, O Lord, made soluble ? —
Thy love, an ocean, whose abyss profound
The plummet-line of thought did never sound.

LIV.

"If thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him." *St. John, xx. 15.*

WHAT marvel if the whole wide world about
(No longer wide to me, but narrow made
As if 'twere all one tomb) I mourning strayed,
Seeking my only Good, wrongly devout ?
So many mists, by mortal creeds breathed out,
Made twilight everywhere and dreary shade,
I could not tell where men my Christ had laid.
So, though He stood beside me, my rash doubt
Buried His nearness in a dim eclipse ;
And, like to Mary when her trembling lips
Even to Himself did the inquiry frame,
" Where lies He now ? " — so did I syllable
Vain words. But when He gently breathed my
name
I knew His voice, and at His feet I fell.

LV.

"Not as the world giveth, give I unto you." *St. John, xiv. 27.*

Not as the world gives, givest Thou, indeed,
Blest Lord of peace ! Pleasures that end in sighs—
Tears of dull sorrow — bitter agonies —
A hollow love that fails us in our need —
Wrong judgments — mockery when our bosoms
bleed —

These are the presents which the world supplies
Out of its poison-caves, and treasures :
Unto our vassalage and slavish heed.
O Lord of love and life, and inner joy,
Thy gifts are different, sure — a gentle ray
That makes the heart more lightsome every day,
A faithfulness no wrongs of ours destroy,—
A thousand pleasures, innocent and coy,
Forgiveness when we err, and guidance when we stray.

LVI.

"Where the spirit of the Lord is — there is liberty." *2 Corinthians, iii. 17.*

I HEARD a child, on a fair summer day,
Its mother ask — "Who made these flowers — this
sod ?"
The mother answered gently — "The good God
Who gave His Son that you might freely play,
And happy be." Then joyfully did stray
The child ; and Pleasure followed where he trod.
Nature was glad. Obeying zephyr's nod

The green leaves twinkled ; and the brooklet gay
Danced to the sound of its own melody.
Light clouds roved free o'er Heaven's fields of blue ;
The sweet birds sang as if their song was new.
And leaves, and brooks, and clouds, and birds
 for me
Said but these happy words — “ Be free, be free,
Christ has given all things joy and liberty ! ”

LVII.

“ Eyes to the blind.” *Job, xxix. 15.*

OH, joy it is when we our mission find,
Even if it be to wipe the humblest tear,
Or still the very faintest human fear.
But something it must be for human kind !
How else appease the thirst of soul and mind —
Remorse — which most doth wait on wasted powers
The rankling nothingness of trifled hours
And thwarted aims ? Feel'st thou that thou art
 blind ?
Go unto Nature. Beauty, Joy, and Use,
Are severed but in man's philosophy.
The rose does more than feed the honey bee ;
Nothing dies in itself. Only unloose
In Christ — Creation's eye — thy filmy sight,
And thou on earth shalt choose thy place aright.

LVIII.

"I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities." *2 Corinthians, xi. 30.*

HE, who did boast his own infirmities
As his best right, in this my rule shall be ;
Lord, in Thy sight, I have no other plea
Save that I want Thy precious sacrifice !
Behold me ! dust and ashes in Thine eyes ;
Yet has the blood of Christ been shed for me,
Therefore I needs must have a dignity ;
Nor dare I even my wretched self despise
For whom Thou didst Thy Father's bosom leave,
To live and die in sorrow. Let me, then,
The more my depths lie open to my ken,
Rise but the more in Thee ! When most I grieve,
Most let me triumph in a joy divine,
Felt to be dearest because wholly Thine.

LIX.

"At thy right hand are pleasures for evermore." *Psalm xvi. 11.*

WITHOUT the smile of God upon the soul
We see not, and the world has lost its light ;
For us there is no quiet in the night,
No beauty in the stars. The saffron stole
Of morning, or the pomp of evening's goal
That celebrates Day's marriage with the Sea ;
Blue distance — silver lake — hill, glen, and tree,
Are sealed unto the spirit like a scroll
Writ in a perished language. But a ray

Upon this darkness suddenly may dart,
And Christ's dear love be poured into the heart
To clothe Creation in a robe of day.
Then doth the morning cheer, the night hath calm,
And skies a glory, and the dews a balm.

LX.

"Fire and hail, snow and vapours — stormy wind fulfilling his word." *Psalm cxlviii. 8.*

THERE are who deem the earthquake and the storm
Fulfilments of that dread mysterious curse,
Which God inflicted on the universe
When man from angel drooped into a worm :
But, come with me, and view sweet Nature's form
After the tempest, which was loud and fierce
The livelong night. Now, all things do rehearse
The praises of that strife which was the germ
Of future peace. Bright is the boundless air,
Earth joyous with her dewy coronal :
And hark ! a festive voice is everywhere
Murmuring in Faith's glad ear, " God blesses all,
Even His judgments. Cheer thee, drooping soul ;
Doubt not all sorrow hath a happy goal."

LXI.

" He taught them as one having authority." *St. Matthew, vii. 29.*

THE written Word is needful ! What were man
Without authority ? Little, I wist,
More than a coil of sand that billows twist,

Leaving brief chronicle where last they ran.
Authority is of Life's darkling span
The need. . . By more than eloquence enticed,
Plato had hung upon the words of Christ ;
Plato, who laid himself beneath the ban
Of human ignorance, nor taught as one
Having authority. Even Mahomet
Nations with Holy Books o'er others set
Who had from heaven no written record won.*
And this was wisdom : for, to man the worm,
Truth's essence breathes away without Truth's form.

LXII.

"As gods, knowing good and evil." *Genesis, iii. 5.*

EVIL ! thou art a necessary good —
Fountain of Individualities,
Great tenure, thou, of all existences
That are not God. . . If rightly understood,
Thou art the lesson-book, and holy rood
Whereby, ascending up sublime degrees,
We know, and reconcile, and difference seize,
And change our earthly for a heavenly mood.
Ah, who can grieve that man has plucked the fruit
Of knowledge? . . Scarcely name we Innocence
The Virtue that is not Experience.
No ! We our souls divinely must transmute
Out of the God-led instincts of the brute,
Into the loftier ways of Providence !

* See Layard's *Ninereh*.

LXIII.

THE seraphs veil their faces with their wings
Before Thy throne, O God ! Then how should I,
Who tremble in a frail mortality,
Reach Thee in reverential visitings ?
Forgive me, if my soul too boldly flings
Conjecture forth to bridge and bring me nigh
To Thee. I only do in truth reply
To my own doubts, my heart's sad murmurings.
I do but put away all thoughts that bar
My love of Thee, and clear Thy lovely name
From things that with Thy high perfection jar,
By the soul's noblest instincts marked with blame ;
Yet in my ignorance I veil my face
Before the throne of Thy adoréd grace.

A QUESTION AND ANSWER.

WHERE is damnation ? —
Man-woven sadness ! —
Hark ! all creation
Answers in gladness !

“ Sin shall dissolve
In goodness supernal ! —
Beauty and Joy
Alone are eternal ! ”

WAIT.

WAIT ! for the day is breaking,
Though the dull night be long ;
Wait ! God is not forsaking
Thy heart. Be strong — be strong !

Wait ! and the clouds of sorrow
Shall melt in gentle showers,
And hues from heaven shall borrow,
As they fall amidst the flowers.

Wait ! 'tis the key to pleasure
And to the plan of God ;
Oh, tarry thou His leisure —
Thy soul shall bear no load !

Wait ! for the time is hastening
When life shall be made clear,
And all who know heart-wasting
Shall feel that God is dear.

Hartley Coleridge.

1797-1849.

REGENERATION.

I NEED a cleansing change within —
My life must once again begin ;
New hope I need, and youth renewed,
And more than human fortitude, —
New faith, new love, and strength to cast
Away the fetters of the past.

Ah ! why did fabling Poets tell
That Lethé only flows in Hell ?
As if, in truth, there was no river
Whereby the leper may be clean
But that which flows, and flows forever,
And crawls along, unheard, unseen,
Whence brutish spirits, in contagious shoals,
Quaff the dull drench of apathetic souls !

Ah, no ! but Lethé flows aloft
With lulling murmur, kind and soft,
As voice which sinners send to heaven
When first they feel their sins forgiven ;
Its every drop as bright and clear
As if indeed it were a tear
Shed by the lovely Magdalen
For Him that was despised of men.

It is the only fount of bliss
In all the human wilderness —
It is the true Bethesda — solely
Endued with healing might, and holy ; —
Not once a year, but evermore —
Not one, but ALL men to restore.

TO A CHILD.

ERE thou wast born “ into this breathing world,”
God wrote some characters upon thy heart.
Oh, let them not, like beads of dew impeared
On morning blades, before the noon depart !

But morning drops before the noon exhale,
And yet those drops appear again at even ;
So childish innocence on earth must fail,
Yet may return to usher thee to heaven.

TO A FRIEND

SUFFERING UNDER BEREAVEMENT.

SAD night for us, but better day for her !
Well may'st thou mourn, but mourn not without hope :
Thou art not one, I know, that can believe
A pausing pulse, an intermitted breath,
Or aught that can to mortal flesh befall,
Can turn to nothing any ray of God,
Or frustrate one good purpose of our Lord.
She was a purpose of her great Creator,
Begun on earth, and well on earth pursued,
Now in the heaven of heavens consummate,
Or only waiting the predestined day,
The flower and glory of her consummation.

RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES.

YEA, we do differ, differ still we must,
For language is the type of thought, and thought
The slave of sense ; and sense is only fraught
With cheques and tokens taken upon trust,
Not for their worth but promise. Earth is all
One mighty parable of Hell and Heaven.
The portion we can read at best is small ;
'Tis little that we know ; and if befall
That Faith do wander, like the restless raven
That rather chose without an aim to roam

O'er the blank world of waters, than to seek,
In the one sacred ark, a duteous home,
May good be with it!

Yes, we do differ when we most agree,
For words are not the same to you and me.
And it may be our several spiritual needs
Are best supplied by seeming different creeds.
And differing, we agree in one
Inseparable communion,
If the true life be in our hearts — the faith,
Which not to want is death ;
To want is penance ; to desire
Is purgatorial fire ;
To hope, is paradise ; and to believe
Is all of Heaven that earth can e'er receive.

ON A FRIEND'S DEATH.

SAD doth it seem, but nought is really sad,
Or only sad that we may better be ;
We should, in very gulfs of grief, be glad,
The great intents of God could we but see.

Think of the souls that he in heaven will meet,
Some that on earth he knew and loved most dearly ;
And whose perfection at their Saviour's feet,
Without a stain of earth, will shine so clearly.

Think, too, of souls on earth unknown to him,
Whom he will know as well as kin or neighbors —
Laborious saints, that now with seraphim
Expect the blessed fruit of all their labors.

Think that he is what oft he wished to be
While yet he was a mortal man on earth ;
Then weep, but know that grief's extremity
Contains a hope which never was in mirth.

THE WORD OF GOD.

IN holy books we read how God hath spoken
To holy men in many different ways ;
But hath the present worked no sign or token ?
Is God quite silent in these latter days ?

And hath our heavenly Sire departed quite,
And left His poor babes in this world alone,
And only left for blind belief — not sight —
Some quaint old riddles in a tongue unknown ?

Oh ! think it not, sweet maid ! God comes to us
With every day, with every star that rises ;
In every moment dwells the Righteous,
And starts upon the soul in sweet surprises.

The Word were but a blank, a hollow sound,
If He that spake it were not speaking still,—
If all the light and all the shade around
Were aught but issues of Almighty will.

Sweet girl, believe that every bird that sings,
And every flower that stars the elastic sod,
And every thought the happy summer brings
To thy pure spirit, is a WORD OF GOD.

SONNETS.

I.

LET me not deem that I was made in vain,
Or that my Being was an accident,
Which Fate, in working its sublime intent,
Not wished to be, to hinder would not deign.
Each drop uncounted in a storm of rain
Hath its own mission, and is duly sent
To its own leaf or blade, not idly spent
'Mid myriad dimples on the shipless main.
The very shadow of an insect's wing
For which the violet cared not while it stayed
Yet felt the lighter for its vanishing,
Proved that the sun was shining by its shade :
Then can a drop of the eternal spring,
Shadow of living lights, in vain be made ?

II.

THINK upon Death, 'tis good to think of Death,
But better far to think upon the Dead.
Death is a spectre with a bony head,
Or the mere mortal body without breath,
The state foredoomed of every son of Seth,
Decomposition — dust, or dreamless sleep.
But the dear Dead are those for whom we weep,
For whom I credit all the Bible saith.
Dead is my father, dead is my good mother,
And what on earth have I to do but die ?
But if by grace I reach the blesséd sky,
I fain would see the same, and not another ;
The very father that I used to see,
The mother that has nursed me on her knee.

III.

HAGAR.

LONE in the wilderness, her child and she,
Sits the dark beauty, and her fierce-eyed boy ;
A heavy burden, and no winsome toy
To such as she, a hanging babe must be.
A slave without a master — wild, nor free,
With anger in her heart ! and in her face
Shame for foul wrong and undeserved disgrace,
Poor Hagar mourns her lost virginity !
Poor woman, fear not — God is everywhere ;
Thy silent tears, thy thirsty infant's moan,

Are known to Him, whose never-absent care
Still wakes to make all hearts and souls his own ;
He sends an angel from beneath his throne
To cheer the outcast in the desert bare.

IV.

ISAIAH XLVI. V. 9.

WHEN I consider all the things that were,
And count them upwards from the general flood,--
The tricks of fraud, and violent deeds of blood,
Weigh down the heart with sullen, deep despair.
I well believe that Satan, Prince of Air,
Torments to ill the pleasurable feeling ;
But ever and anon, a breeze of healing
Proclaims that God is always everywhere.
'Twas hard to see him in the days of old,
And harder still to see our God to-day ;
For prayer is slack, and love, alas ! is cold,
And Faith, a wanderer, weak and wide astray :
Who hath the faith, the courage, to behold
God in the judgments that have passed away ?

V.

ALL Nature ministers to Hope. The snow
Of sluggish Winter, bedded on the hill,
And the small tinkle of the frozen rill,

The swoln flood's sullen roar, the storms that go
With crash, and howl, and horrid voice of woe,
Making swift passage for their lawless will —
All prophesy of good. The hungry trill
Of the lone birdie, cowering close below
The dripping eaves — it hath a kindly feeling,
And cheers the life that lives for milder hours.
Why, then, since Nature still is busy healing,
And Time, the master, his own work concealing,
Decks every grave with verdure and with flowers, —
Why should Despair oppress immortal powers ?

VI.

FAITH.

How much thy Holy Name hath been misused,
Beginner of all good, all-mighty Faith !
Some men thy blessed symbols have abused,
Making them badge or secret Shibboleth
For greed accepted, or for spite refused,
Or just endured for fear of pain or death.
To some, by fearful conscience self-accused,
Thou com'st a goblin self, a hideous wraith .
With such as these thou art an inward strife,
A shame, a misery, and a death in life,
A self-asserting, self-disputing lie ;
A thing to unbelief so near allied,
That it would gladly be a suicide,
And only lives because it dare not die.

VII.

BELIEVE AND PRAY.

BELIEVE and pray. Who can believe and pray
Shall never fail nor falter, though the fate
Of his abode, or geniture, or date,
With charms beguile, or threats obstruct his way.
For free is Faith, and potent to obey,
And Love, content in patient prayer to wait,
Like the poor cripple at the Beautiful Gate,
Shall be relieved on some miraculous day.
Lord, I believe ! — Lord, help mine unbelief!
If I could pray, I know that Thou would'st hear ;
Well were it though my faith were only grief,
And I could pray but with a contrite tear.
But none can pray whose wish is not Thy will,
And none believe who are not with Thee still.

VIII.

“MULTUM DILEXIT.”*

SHE sat and wept beside His feet ; the weight
Of sin oppressed her heart ; for all the blame,
And the poor malice of the worldly shame,
To her was past, extinct, and out of date.
Only the *sin* remained — the leprous state : —
She would be melted by the heat of love,
By fires far fiercer than are blown to prove

* She loved much.

And purge the silver ore adulterate.
She sat and wept, and with her untressed hair
Still wiped the feet she was so blest to touch ;
And He wiped off the soiling of despair
From her sweet soul, because she loved so much.
I am a sinner, full of doubts and fears,
Make me a humble thing of love and tears.

IX.

REPENTANCE BEFORE FORGIVENESS.*

If I have sinned in act, I may repent ;
If I have erred in thought, I may disclaim
My silent error, and yet feel no shame ;
But if my soul, big with an ill intent,
Guilty in will, by fate be innocent,
Or being bad, yet murmurs at the curse
And incapacity of being worse,
Making my hungry passion still keep Lent
In keen expectance of a Carnival,—
Where, in all worlds that round the Sun revolve
And shed their influence on this passive ball,
Abides a power that can my soul absolve ?
Could any sin survive, and be forgiven,
One sinful wish would make a hell of heaven.

* " May one be pardoned, and retain the offence ? " — *Shakspeare.*

SENSE, IF YOU CAN FIND IT.

LIKE one pale, flitting, lonely gleam
 Of sunshine on a winter's day,
There came a thought upon my dream,
I know not whence, but fondly deem
 It came from far away.

Those sweet, sweet snatches of delight
 That visit our bedarkened clay,
Like passage birds, with hasty flight
It cannot be they perish quite,
 Although they pass away.

They come and go, and come again;
 They're ours, whatever time they stay:
Think not, my heart, they come in vain,
If one brief while they soothe thy pain
 Before they pass away.

But whither go they? No one knows
 Their home,— but yet they seem to say,
That far beyond this gulf of woes,
There is a region of repose
 For them that pass away.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

1770-1834.

WHO PRAYETH BEST.

O WEDDING-GUEST ! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea :
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seeméd there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company !

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray ;
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay !

Farewell ! farewell ! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest,
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small ;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

MAN REDEEMABLE.

LINES ON VISITING A PRISON.

AND this place my forefathers made for man !
With other ministrations thou, O Nature !
Healest thy wandering and distempered child :
Thou pourest on him thy soft influences,
Thy sunny hues, fair forms, and breathing sweets, —
Thy melodies of woods, and winds, and waters,
Till he relent, and can no more endure
To be a jarring and a dissonant thing
Amid this general dance and minstrelsy ;
But, bursting into tears, wins back his way,
His angry spirit healed and harmonized
By the benignant touch of love and beauty.

William Wordsworth.

1770-1850.

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY, FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD.

OUR birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar :
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home :
Heaven lies about us in our infancy !
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing boy ;
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,—
 He sees it in his joy ;
The youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is Nature's priest,

And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended ;
At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy soul's immensity !
Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage ! thou eye among the blind,
That, deaf, and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the Eternal Mind,—
Mighty prophet ! Seer blest !
On whom those truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave ;
Thou, over whom thy immortality
Broods like the day, a master o'er a slave,
A presence which is not to be put by,—
Thou little child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,—
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife ?
Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life !

O, joy ! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,—

That nature yet remembers

What was so fugitive !

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction : not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest ;
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast :—

Not for these I raise

The song of thanks and praise :

But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings ;
Blank misgivings of a creature

Moving about in worlds not realized ;

High instincts before which our mortal nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised :

But for those first affections,

Those shadowy recollections,

Which, be they what they may,

Are yet the fountain light of all our day,

Are yet a master light of all our seeing ;

Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal silence : truths that wake,

To perish never ;

Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,

Nor man, nor boy,

Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy !

Hence, in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea,
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Then sing, ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song !
And let the young lambs bound,
As to the tabor's sound !

We in thought will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May !

What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower ;

We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind ;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be ;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering ;
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

FAITH BY VIRTUE.

WHAT then remains ? — To seek
Those helps, — for his occasions ever near,
Who lacks not will to use them : — vows, renewed
On the first motion of a holy thought ;
Vigils of contemplation ; praise ; and prayer,
A stream, which from the fountain of the heart
Issuing, however feebly, nowhere flows
Without access of unexpected strength.
But, above all, the victory is most sure
For *him*, who, seeking faith by virtue, strives
To yield entire submission to the law
Of Conscience ; Conscience reverenced and obeyed
As God's most intimate Presence in the soul
And his most perfect Image in the world.
— Endeavor thus to live ; these rules regard ;
These helps solicit ; and a steadfast seat
Shall then be yours among the happy few
Who dwell on earth, yet breathe empyreal air,
Sons of the morning. For your nobler part,
Ere disencumbered of her mortal chains,
Doubt shall be quelled and trouble chased away ;
With only such degree of sadness left
As may support longings of pure desire !
And strengthen Love, rejoicing secretly
In the sublime attractions of the Grave.

THE RESPONSES OF EXTERNAL NATURE.

I HAVE seen
A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract
Of inland ground, applying to his ear
The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell ;
To which, in silence hushed, his very soul
Listened intensely ; and his countenance soon
Brightened with joy ; for murmurings from within
Were heard, — sonorous cadences ! whereby
To his belief, the monitor expressed
Mysterious union with its native sea.
E'en such a shell the universe itself
Is to the ear of Faith ; and there are times,
I doubt not, when to you it doth impart
Authentic tidings of invisible things ;
Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power ;
And central peace, subsisting at the heart
Of endless agitation. Here you stand,
Adore and worship, when you know it not ;
Pious beyond the intention of your thought ;
Devout above the meaning of your will !

MAN NEVER IRRECLAIMABLE.

'Tis Nature's law
That none, the meanest of created things,
Of forms created the most vile and brute,

The dullest or most noxious, should exist
Divorced from good,— a spirit and pulse of good,
A life and soul, to every mode of being
Inseparably linked. Then be assured
That least of all can aught, that ever owned
The heaven-regarding eye and front sublime
Which man is born to,— sink, howe'er depressed,
So low as to be scorned without a sin ;
Without offence to God cast out of view
Like the dry remnant of a garden flower
Whose seeds are shed, or as an implement
Worn out and worthless.

THE MORAL LAW.

ALL true glory rests,
All praise of safety, and all happiness,
Upon the moral law. Egyptian Thebes,
Tyre by the margin of the sounding waves,
Palmyra central in the desert, fell !
And the arts died by which they had been raised.
Call Archimedes from his buried tomb
Upon the plain of vanished Syracuse,
And feelingly this age shall make report
How insecure, how baseless in itself,
Is that philosophy, whose sway is framed
For mere material instruments : — how weak
Those arts, and high inventions, if unpropped
By virtue.

ODE TO DUTY.

STERN daughter of the voice of God !
O Duty ! if that name thou love,
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove ;
Thou, who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe,
From vain temptations dost set free,
And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity !

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them ; who, in love and truth,
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth :
Glad hearts ! without reproach or blot ;
Who do thy work and know it not :
Long may the kindly impulse last !
But thou, if they should totter, teach them to stand
fast !

Serene will be our days and bright,
And happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.
And they a blissful course may hold,
Even now, who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed ;
Yet find that other strength, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried,
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust :
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred
The task, in smoother walks to stray ;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control ;
But in the quietness of thought :
Me this unchartered freedom tires ;
I feel the weight of chance desires ;
My hopes no more must change their name,
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver ! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace ;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face ;
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds ;
And Fragrance in thy footing treads ;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong ;
And the most ancient heavens, through thee, are fresh
and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power !
I call thee ; I myself commend

Unto thy guidance, from this hour ;
O, let my weakness have an end !
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice ;
The confidence of reason give ;
And in the light of truth thy bondman let me live !

THE SOUL'S RECUPERATIVE ENERGIES.

As men from men
Do, in the constitution of their souls,
Differ, by mystery not to be explained ;
And as we fall by various ways, and sink
One deeper than another, self-condemned,
Through manifold degrees of guilt and shame,
So manifold and various are the ways
Of restoration, fashioned to the steps
Of all infirmity, and tending all
To the same point, — attainable by all, —
Peace in ourselves and union with our God.

John Milton.

1608-1674.

SPIRITUAL POPULATION OF THE UNIVERSE.

NOR think, though men were none,
That Heaven would want spectators, God want praise.
Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep.
All these with ceaseless praise His works behold,
Both day and night. How often from the steep
Of echoing hill or thickets have we heard
Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive to each other's note,
Singing their great Creator! Oft in bands,
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,
With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds
In full harmonic numbers joined, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven.

ON HIS BLINDNESS.

WHEN I consider how my light is spent,
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent, which is death to hide,
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent,
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide ;
“Doth God exact day-labor, light denied ?”
I fondly ask : but Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, — “God doth not need
Either man’s work, or His own gifts ; who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve him best : His state
Is kingly ; thousands at His bidding speed,
And post o’er land and ocean, without rest :
They also serve, who only stand and wait.”

VIRTUE A LIGHT TO HERSELF.

VIRTUE could see to do what Virtue would
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk. . . .
He, that has light within his own clear breast,
May sit in the centre, and enjoy bright days :
But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,
Benighted walks under the midday sun ;
Himself is his own dungeon !

John Sterling.

1806-1844.

THE PENITENT.

STILL prayers are strong, and God is good ;
Man is not made for endless ill ;
Dear sprite ! my soul's tormented mood
Has yet a hope thou canst not kill.

Repentance clothes in grass and flowers
The grave in which the past is laid ;
And close to Faith's old minster towers,
The Cross lights up the ghostly shade.

Around its foot the shapes of fear,
Whose eyes my weaker heart appal,
As sister suppliants thrill the ear
With cries that loud for mercy call.

Thou, God, wilt hear ! Thy pangs are meant
To heal the spirit, not destroy ;
And what may seem for vengeance sent,
When thou commandest, works for joy.

DIVINE DISCIPLINE TOWARDS MAN.

ETERNAL Mind ! creation's Light and Lord !
Thou trainest man to love Thy perfect will,
By love to know Thy truth's obscurest word,
And so his years with hallowed life to fill ;
To own in all things round Thy law's accord,
Which bids all hope be strong to vanquish ill ;
Illumined thus by Thy diffusive ray,
The darkened soul and world are bright with day.

In storm, and flood, and all decays of time,
In hunger, plagues, and man-devouring war ;
In all the boundless tracts of inward crime —
In selfish hates, and lusts that deepest mar,
In lazy dreams that clog each task sublime,
In loveless doubts of truth's unsettling star ;
In all — Thy Spirit will not cease to brood
With vital strength, unfolding all to good.

The headlong cataract and tempest's roar,
The rage of seas, and earthquake's hoarse dismay,

The crush of Empire, sapped by tears and gore,
And shrieks of hearts their own corruption's prey ;
All sounds of death enforce Thy righteous lore,
In smoothest flow Thy being's truth obey,
And, heard in ears from passion's witchery free,
One endless music make — a hymn to Thee !

But most, O God ! the inward eyes of thought
Discern Thy laws in all that works within ;
The conscious will, by hard experience taught,
Divines Thy mercy shown by hate of sin ;
And hearts whose peace by shame and grief was
bought,
Thy blessings praise that first in wo begin,
For still on earthly pain's tormented ground,
Thy love's immortal flowers and fruits abound.

Fair sight it is, and med'cinal for man,
To see Thy guidance lead the human breast ;
In life's unopened germ behold Thy plan,
Till 'mid the ripened soul it stands confest ;
From impulse too minute for us to scan,
Awakening sense with love and purpose blest ;
And through confusion, error, trial, grief,
Maturing reason, conscience, calm belief.

This to have known, my soul, be thankful thou ! —
This clear, ideal form of endless good,
Which casts around the adoring learner's brow
The ray that marks man's holiest brotherhood ;

Thus e'en from guilt's deep curse and slavish vow,
And dreams whereby the light was long withheld,
Thee, Lord ! whose mind is rule supreme to all,
Unveiled we see, and hail Thy wisdom's call.

THE SOUL DISCIPLINED TO SEE GOD'S WILL.

BOLD is the life, and deep and vast in man —
A flood of being poured unchecked from Thee!
To Thee returned by Thy unfailing plan,
When tried and trained Thy will unveiled to see.

The spirit leaves the body's wondrous frame,
That frame itself a world of strength and skill ;
The nobler inmate new abodes will claim,
In every change to Thee aspiring still.

Although from darkness born, to darkness fled,
We know that light beyond surrounds the whole ;
The man survives, though the weird-corpse be dead,
And He who dooms the flesh redeems the soul.

Horace Smith.

1779-1849.

THE PERPETUAL RELIGION.

RELIGIONS — from the soul deriving breath, —
Should know no death ;
Yet do they perish, mingling their remains
With fallen fanes ;
Creeds, canons, dogmas, councils, are the wrecked
And mouldering Masonry of Intellect. —

Apis, Osiris, paramount of yore
On Egypt's shore, —
Woden and Thor, through the wide North adored,
With blood outpoured, —
Jove and the multiform divinities,
To whom the Pagan nations bowed their knees, —

Lo ! they are cast aside, dethroned, forlorn,
Defaced, out-worn,
Like the world's childish dolls, which but insult
Its age adult,
Or prostrate scarecrows, on whose rags we tread
With scorn proportioned to our former dread.

Alas for human reason ! all is change,
Ceaseless and strange ;
All ages form new systems, leaving heirs
To cancel theirs ;
The future will but imitate the past ;
And instability alone will last.

Is there no compass, then, by which to steer
This erring sphere ?
No tie that may indissolubly bind
To God, mankind ?
No code that may defy Time's sharpest tooth ?
No fixed, immutable, unerring truth ?

There is ! there is ! One primitive and sure,
Religion pure,
Unchanged in spirit, though its forms and codes
Wear myriad modes,
Contains all creeds within its mighty span :
THE LOVE OF GOD DISPLAYED IN LOVE OF MAN.

This is the Christian's faith when rightly read ;
Oh ! may it spread,

Till earth redeemed from every hateful leaven
 Makes peace with Heaven ;
Below one blessed brotherhood of love,
One Father — worshipped with one voice — above !

A PRAYER.

FATHER and God ! whose love and might
To every sense are blazoned bright
On the vast three-leaved Bible — earth — sea — sky,
Pardon th' impugners of Thy laws,
Expand their hearts, and give them cause
To bless th' exhaustless grace they now deny.

THE QUARREL OF FAITH, HOPE, AND CHARITY.

ONCE Faith, Hope, and Charity traversed the land
In sisterhood's uninterrupted embraces,
Performing their office of love hand in hand,—
Of the whole Christian world, the appropriate
Graces.

But tiffs, since those primitive days, have occurred,
That threaten to sever this friendly relation,
As may well be surmised when I state word for word,
The terms of their latest and worst altercation.

“ Sister Charity, prythee allow me to state,”
Cries Faith, in a tone of contemptuous sneering,
“ That while you affect to be meek and sedate,
Your conduct is cunning, your tone domineering.

“ In the times that are gone my world-harassing name
“ Received some accession of strength every hour ;
“ St. Bartholomew’s Massacre hallowed my fame,
“ And Sicily’s Vespers asserted my power.

“ When martyrs in multitudes rushed at my call,
“ To peril their lives for Theology’s sake,
“ Mine too was the voice that cried ‘ Sacrifice all,
“ With gaol and with gibbet, with faggot and
stake.’

“ When the banner of orthodox slaughter was furled,
“ And subjects no more from each other dissented,
“ I set them at war with the rest of the world,
“ And for centuries national struggles fomented.

“ What are all the great heroes on history’s page,
“ But puppets who figured as I pulled the strings ?
“ Crusades I engendered in every age,
“ And Faith was the leader of armies and kings.

“ In those days of my glory Hope followed my track,
“ In warfare a firm and impartial ally,
“ For she constantly patted both sides on the back,
“ And promised them both a reward in the sky.”

Here Charity, heaving disconsolate sighs,
That said "I admit what I deeply deplore,"
Uplifted to heaven her tear-suffused eyes,
Which seemed but to anger her sister the more.

"Nay, none of your cant, hypocritical minx!"
She cried in a louder and bitterer tone,
"If you feel any fancy to whimper, methinks
"You might weep that the days of my glory are
gone.

"What wreck of my palmy puissance is left?
"What bravos and bullies my greatness declare?
"Of the holy and dear Inquisition bereft,
"All my fierce fulminations are impotent air!" . . .

With the look of an angel, the voice of a dove,
Thus Charity answered — "Since Concord alone
"Can prosper our partnership mission of love
"And exalt the attraction that calls her her own,

"I would not, dear sisters, e'en harbor a thought
"That might peril a friendship so truly divine;
"And if in our feelings a change has been wrought,
"I humbly submit that the change is not mine.....

"But now when men, turning from dogmas to deeds,
"Bear the scriptural dictum of Jesus in mind,
"That salvation depends not on canons and creeds,
"But on love of the Lord and the love of our kind,

“ My voice can be heard, and my arguments weighed,
“ Which explains why such numerous converts of
late
“ Are under my love-breathing standard arrayed,
“ Who once, beneath yours, were excited to hate.

“ Superstition must throw off Religion’s disguise ;
“ For men, now enlightened, not darkling, like owls,
“ While they reverence priests who are holy and wise,
“ Will no longer be hoodwinked by cassocks or
cowls.

“ If, sisters ! forgetting your primitive troth,
“ You would still part the world into tyrants and
slaves,
“ What wonder that sages should look on you both
“ As the virtues of dupes for the profits of knaves ?

“ You would separate ? Do so — I give you full
scope ;
“ But reflect, you are both of you nought when we
part ;
“ While I, ’tis well known, can supply Faith and
Hope,
“ When I choose for my temple an innocent heart.”

MORAL ALCHEMY.

THE toils of Alchemists, whose vain pursuit
Sought to transmute
Dross into gold,— their secrets and their store
Of mystic lore,
What to the jibing modern do they seem?
An ignis fatuus chase, a phantasy, a dream!—

Yet for enlightened *moral* Alchemists
There still exists
A philosophic stone, whose magic spell
No tongue may tell,
Which renovates the soul's decaying health,
And what it touches turns to purest mental wealth.

This secret is revealed in every trace
Of Nature's face,
Whose seeming frown invariably tends
To smiling ends,
Transmuting ills into their opposite,
And all that shocks the sense to subsequent delight.—

Seems Earth unlovely in her robe of snow?
Then look below,
Where Nature in her subterranean Ark,
Silent and dark,
Already has each floral germ unfurled
That shall revive and clothe the dead and naked world.

Behold those perished flowers to earth consigned —
They, like mankind,
Seek in their grave new birth. By nature's power,
Each in its hour,
Clothed in new beauty, from its tomb shall spring,
And from its tube or chalice heavenward incense fling.

Laboratories of a wider fold
I now behold,
Where are prepared the harvests yet unborn
Of wine, oil, corn. —
In those mute rayless banquet halls I see
Myriads of coming feasts with all their revelry. —

Yon teeming and minuter cells enclose
The embryos
Of fruits and seeds, food for the feathered race,
Whose chanted grace,
Swelling in choral gratitude on high,
Shall with thanksgiving anthems melodize the sky. —

And what materials, mystic Alchemist !
Dost Thou enlist
To fabricate this ever-varied feast,
For man, bird, beast ?
Whence the life, plenty, music, beauty, bloom ?
From silence, languor, death, unsightliness, and
gloom ! —

From Nature's magic hand, whose touch makes sadness
Eventual gladness,
The reverent moral Alchemist may learn
The art to turn
Fate's roughest, hardest, most forbidding dross,
Into the mental gold that knows not change or loss.—

Lose we a valued friend ?— To soothe our woe
Let us bestow
On those who still survive an added love,
So shall we prove,
Howe'er the dear departed we deplore,
In friendship's sum and substance no diminished
store.—

Lose we our health ?— Now may we fully know
What thanks we owe
For our sane years, perchance of lengthened scope :
Now does our hope
Point to the day when sickness, taking flight,
Shall make us better feel health's exquisite delight.—

In losing fortune, many a lucky elf
Has found himself.—
As all our moral bitters are designed
To brace the mind,
And renovate its healthy tone, the wise
Their sorest trials hail as blessings in disguise.

There is *no* gloom on earth ; for God above
 Chastens in love,
Transmuting sorrows into golden joy
 Free from alloy.
His dearest attribute is still to bless,
And man's most welcome hymn is grateful cheerfulness.

THE HEART'S SANCTUARY.

For man there still is left one sacred charter ;
One refuge still remains for human woes.
Victim of care ! or persecution's martyr !
Who seek'st a sure asylum from thy foes,
Learn that the holiest, safest, purest, best,
Is man's own breast.

There is a solemn sanctuary founded
By God himself ; not for transgressors meant ;
But that the man oppressed, the spirit wounded,
And all beneath the world's injustice bent,
Might turn from outward wrong, turmoil and din,
To peace within !

Andrews Norton.

1786-1853.

THE DEPARTED SPIRIT.

HE has gone to his God ; he has gone to his home,
No more amid peril and error to roam ;
 His eyes are no longer dim ;
 His feet will no more falter ;
No grief can follow him ;
 No pang his cheek can alter.

There are paleness, and weeping, and sighs below ;
For our faith is faint, and our tears will flow ;
 But the harps of heaven are ringing ;
 Glad angels come to greet him,
And hymns of joy are singing,
 While old friends press to meet him.

O ! honored, beloved, to earth unconfined,
Thou hast soared on high, thou hast left us behind.

But our parting is not forever,
We will follow thee by heaven's light
Where the grave cannot dissever
The souls whom God will unite.

SUBMISSION.

My God, I thank Thee ! may no thought
E'er deem Thy chastisement severe ;
But may this heart, by sorrow taught,
Calm each wild wish, each idle fear.

Thy mercy bids all nature bloom ;
The sun shines bright, and man is gay ;
Thine equal mercy spreads the gloom,
That darkens o'er his little day.

Full many a throb of grief and pain
Thy frail and erring child must know ;
But not one prayer is breathed in vain,
Nor does one tear unheeded flow.

Thy various messengers employ ;
Thy purposes of love fulfil ;
And 'mid the wreck of human joy,
Let kneeling Faith adore Thy will.

ON A FRIEND'S DEATH.

Dost thou, amid the rapturous glow
With which thy soul her welcome hears,
Dost thou still think of us below,
Of earthly scenes, of human tears?

Perhaps e'en now thy thoughts return
To when in summer's moonlight walk,
Of all that now is thine to learn,
We framed no light or fruitless talk.

How vivid still past scenes appear !
I feel as though all were not o'er ;
As though 'twere strange I cannot hear
Thy voice of friendship yet once more.

We meet again ! — A little while,
And where thou art I too shall be ;
And then, with what an angel smile
Of gladness, thou wilt welcome me !

John Bowring.

MATINS AND VESPERS.

I.

LORD ! when I seek Thy face, I feel
I am but dust — the sprinkled dew
Of morning. But the towering will
That soars to heaven, is heavenly still —
And man, though clay, is *spirit* too.

Yes ! I can feel that, though a clod
Of the dark vale, there is a *sense*
Of better things — the fit abode
Of *something* tending up to God —
A germ of pure intelligence.

I know not how the Eternal hand
Has moulded man — but this I know,
That whilst 'mid earth's strange scenes I stand,
Bright visions of a better land
Go with me still, where'er I go.

And surely dreams so pure, so sweet,
 Friendly to hope and joy and worth,
 Are not the phantoms of deceit,
 Delusions sent to blind, to cheat
 The weary, wandering sons of earth.

My God ! we are Thine offspring — time
 Is but our infancy — the earth
 Our cradle — but our *home* 's a clime
 Eternal, sorrowless, sublime —
 Heaven is the country of our birth !

II.

WHY should we fear ? waking or sleeping,
 Man is alike in Thy holy keeping,
 Let him not shrink though his bark be driven
 By the rude storm — let nought alarm him ;
 The tempest may burst, but cannot harm him ;
 Safely he steers to his port in heaven.
 God is around us, o'er us, near us,
 What have his children then to fear ?
 Is He not always present to hear us,
 Willing to grant, as willing to hear ?

III.

My God ! my Father ! on Thee will I rest —
 Rest with unbounded confidence on Thee ;
 No slavish fears shall now inthrall my breast ;

I stand erect in holiest liberty.
Thou dwell'st in light unsearchable — and here
Thy children in a night of darkness roam ;
But earth shall not detain the wanderer ;
Heaven is his destiny, and heaven his home.
There peace and love, in holiest union bound,
Shall gild with everlasting smiles the scene,
And God's pure presence, scattering light around,
Fill every heart with joy and bliss serene.

IV.

MAN's hopes and fears may seem confined, to him
Whose vision stretches not o'er mortal things ;
But the most distant star's invisible beam,
Or comet, in his farthest journeyings,
Or all the extent which philosophic ken
Has given to infinite space, — th' elastic soul
Springs over ! These, and more than these, in vain
Her free and untried wanderings would control.
At will, she travels on from sun to sun —
System to system — peoples as she flies
Unnumbered stars — an all-creating one !
Dives into nature's deepest mysteries ;
Unlocks the gates of death, and holds communion
With spirits of the just ; and yet this spark,
So bright and beautiful, is held in union
With mortal clay ; — unintellectual, dark, —
And *seems* to perish. It can perish never !
Born of the heavens, again to heaven it speeds

To dwell in its own home — to shine forever,
Divested of its dull and mortal weeds !

HYMN.

FROM the recesses of a lowly spirit
My humble prayer ascends — O Father ! hear it :
Upsoaring on the wings of fear and meekness,
Forgive its weakness.

I know, I feel, how mean and how unworthy
The trembling sacrifice I pour before Thee ;
What can I offer in Thy presence holy,
But sin and folly ?

For in Thy sight, who every bosom viewest,
Cold are our warmest vows, and vain our truest ;
Thoughts of a hurrying hour, our lips repeat them,
Our hearts forget them.

We see Thy hand — it leads us, it supports us ;
We hear Thy voice — it counsels and it courts us ;
And then we turn away — and still Thy kindness
Pardons our blindness.

And still Thy rain descends, Thy sun is glowing,
Fruits ripen round, flowers are beneath us blowing,
And, as if man were some deserving creature,
Joys cover nature.

O, how long-suffering, Lord ! but Thou delightest
To win with love the wandering — Thou invitest,
By smiles of mercy, not by frowns or terrors,
Man from his errors.

Who can resist Thy gentle call, appealing
To every generous thought, and grateful feeling ?
That voice paternal, whispering, watching ever
My bosom ? — never.

Father and Saviour ! plant within that bosom
These seeds of holiness, and bid them blossom
In fragrance and in beauty bright and vernal,
And spring eternal.

Then place them in those everlasting gardens,
Where angels walk, and seraphs are the wardens ;
Where every flower that creeps through death's dark
portal
Becomes immortal.

THE BEAUTIES OF CREATION.

OURS is a lovely world ! how fair
Thy beauties, even on earth, appear !
The seasons in their courses fall,
And bring successive joys : the sea,
The earth, the sky, are full of thee,
Benignant, glorious LORD OF ALL.

There's beauty in the break of day ;
 There's glory in the noon-tide ray ;
 There's sweetness in the twilight shades ; —
 Magnificence in night : thy love
 Arched the grand heaven of blue above,
 And all our smiling earth pervades.

And if thy glories here be found
 Streaming with radiance all around,
 What must the FOUNT OF GLORY be ?
 In Thee we'll hope, — in Thee confide,
 Thou mercy's never-ebbing tide !
 Thou love's unfathomable sea !

UNDEVELOPED GOOD.

THERE is in every human heart
 Some not completely barren part,
 Where seeds of truth and love might grow,
 And flowers of generous virtue blow :
 To plant, to watch, to water there —
 This, as our duty, be our care !

Hast thou e'er seen a garden clad
 In all the robes that Eden had —
 Or vale o'erspread with streams and trees,
 A paradise of mysteries —
 Plains with green hills adorning them,
 Like jewels in a diadem ?

These gardens, vales, and plains, and hills,
Which beauty gilds and music fills,
Were once but deserts ; — culture's hand
Has scattered verdure o'er the land,
And smiles and fragrance rule serene,
Where barren wilds usurped the scene.

And such is man. A soil which breeds
Or sweetest flowers or vilest weeds ;
Flowers lovely as the morning's light,
Weeds deadly as the aconite ;
Just as his heart is trained to bear
The poisonous weed, or flow'ret fair.

Thy outcast brother's blackest crime
May, in his Maker's eye sublime,
In spite of all thy pride, be less
Than e'en thy daily waywardness ;
Than many a sin and many a stain
Forgotten — and impressed again.

DESTINY OF THE SOUL.

FROM THE RUSSIAN OF DERZHAVINE.

THE chain of being is complete in me ;
In me is matter's last gradation lost,
And the next step is spirit, — deity !
I can command the lightning, and am dust !

A monarch, and a slave ! a worm, a god !
Whence came I here, and how ? so marvellously
Constructed and conceived ! unknown ? this clod
Lives surely through some higher energy,
For from itself alone it could not be !

Creator, yes ! Thy wisdom and Thy word
Created *me*, Thou source of life and good !
Thou Spirit of my spirit, and my Lord !
Thy light, Thy love, in their bright plenitude,
Filled me with an immortal soul, to spring
Over the abyss of death, and bade it wear
The garments of eternal day, and wing
Its heavenly flight beyond this little sphere,
Even to its source, — to Thee, — its Author there.

Alfred Tennyson.

1810.

FROM "IN MEMORIAM."

I.

STRONG Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove :

Thine are these orbs of light and shade ;
Thou madest Life in man and brute ;
Thou madest Death ; and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust :
Thou madest man, he knows not why ;
He thinks he was not made to die ;
And Thou hast made him ; Thou art just.

Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, Thou :
Our wills are ours, we know not how
Our wills are ours, to make them Thine.

Our little systems have their day ;
They have their day and cease to be :
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith ; we cannot know :
For knowledge is of things we see ;
And yet we trust it comes from Thee,
A beam in darkness : let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell ;
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight ;
We mock Thee when we do not fear :
But help Thy foolish ones to bear ;
Help thy vain worlds to bear Thy light.

Forgive what seemed my sin in me ;
What seemed my worth since I began :
For merit lives from man to man,
And not from man, O Lord, to Thee.

Forgive my grief for one removed,
Thy creature, whom I found so fair,
I trust he lives in Thee, and there
I find him worthier to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering cries,
Confusions of a wasted youth ;
Forgive them where they fail in truth,
And in Thy wisdom make me wise.

II.

O, YET we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt and taints of blood ;

That nothing walks with aimless feet ;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete ;

That not a worm is cloven in vain,
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivelled in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold ! we know not any thing ;
I can but trust that good shall fall

At last,—far off,—at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream : but what am I ?
An infant crying in the night :
An infant crying for the light :
And with no language but a cry.

III.

O THOU that after toil and storm
May'st seem to have reached a purer air,
Whose faith has centre everywhere,
Nor cares to fix itself to form,—

Leave thou thy sister, when she prays,
Her early heaven, her happy views ;
Nor thou with shadowed hint confuse
A life that leads melodious days.

Her faith through form is pure as thine,
Her hands are quicker unto good.
Oh, sacred be the flesh and blood
To which she links a truth divine !

See thou, that countest reason ripe
In holding by the law within,
Thou fail not in a world of sin,
And even for want of such a type.

IV.

RING out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light ;
The year is dying in the night ;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow :
The year is going, let him go ;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more ;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife ;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times :
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite ;

Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease,
 Ring out the narrowing lust of gold ;
 Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
 The larger heart, the kindlier hand ;
 Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

James Montgomery.

1771.

MAN IMMORTAL.

MAN, to this narrow sphere confined,
Dies when he but begins to live.
Oh! if there be no world on high
To yield his powers unfettered scope ;
If man be only born to die,
Whence this inheritance of hope ?
Wherefore to him alone were lent
Riches that never can be spent ?
Enough, not more, to all the rest,
For life and happiness, was given ;
To man, mysteriously unblest,
Too much for any state but heaven.

It is not thus ; — it cannot be,
That one so gloriously endowed

With views that reach eternity,
Should shine and vanish like a cloud :
Is there a God ? All nature shows
There is, — and yet no mortal knows :
The mind that could this truth conceive,
Which brute sensation never taught,
No longer to the dust would cleave,
But grow immortal with the thought.

TO ONE IN AFFLCTION.

LIFT up thine eyes, afflicted soul !
From earth lift up thine eyes,
Though dark the evening shadows roll,
And daylight beauty dies ;
One sun is set, a thousand more
Their rounds of glory run,
Where science lends thee to explore
In every star a sun.

Thus when some long loved comfort ends,
And nature would despair,
Faith to the heaven of heaven ascends,
And meets ten thousand there ;
First faint and small, then clear and bright,
They gladden all the gloom,
And stars, that seem but points of light,
The rank of suns assume.

DE PROFUNDIS.

OUT of the depths of woe
To Thee, O Lord ! I cry ;
Darkness surrounds me, but I know
That Thou art ever nigh

Then hearken to my voice ;
Give ear to my complaint ;
Thou bid'st the mourning soul rejoice,
Thou comfortest the faint.

I cast my hope on Thee ;
Thou can'st, Thou wilt, forgive ;
Wert Thou to mark iniquity,
Who in Thy sight could live ?

Humbly on Thee I wait,
Confessing all my sin :
Lord ! I am knocking at Thy gate ;
Open, and take me in !

Like those, whose longing eyes
Watch, till the morning star
(Though late, and seen through tempests) rise,
Heaven's portals to unbar,—

Like those I watch and pray,
And, though it tarry long,
Catch the first gleam of welcome day,
Then burst into a song.

Glory to God above !
The waters soon will cease :
For, lo ! the swift returning dove
Brings home the sign of peace.

Though storms His face obscure,
And dangers threaten loud,
Jehovah's covenant is sure,
His bow is in the cloud !

THE SOUL'S IMMORTAL ORIGIN.

THERE is a calm for those who weep,
A rest for weary pilgrims found ;
And while the mouldering ashes sleep
Low in the ground,

The soul, of origin divine,
God's glorious image, freed from clay,
In heaven's eternal sphere shall shine
A star of day.

The Sun is but a spark of fire,
A transient meteor in the sky ;
The Soul, immortal as its Sire,
Shall never die.

FOREVER WITH THE LORD.

“FOREVER with the Lord !”

Amen. So let it be !

Life for the dead is in that word,

’Tis immortality.

Here in the body pent,

Absent from Him I roam ;

Yet nightly pitch my moving tent

A day’s march nearer home.

My Father’s house on high !

Home of my soul ! how near,

At times, to Faith’s aspiring eye,

Thy golden gates appear !

Ah, then my spirit faints,

To reach the land I love ;

The bright inheritance of saints,

Jerusalem above.

Yet doubts still intervene,

And all my comfort flies ;

Like Noah’s dove, I flit between

Rough seas and stormy skies.

Anon the clouds depart,

The winds and waters cease ;

While sweetly o’er my gladdened heart,

Expands the bow of peace.

“ Forever with the Lord ! ”
Father, if ’tis Thy will,
The promise of Thy gracious word,
E’en here to me fulfil.
Be Thou at my right hand,
So shall I never fail ;
Uphold me, and I needs must stand ;
Fight, and I must prevail.

So, when my latest breath
Shall rend the veil in twain,
By death I shall escape from death,
And life eternal gain.
Knowing “ as I am known,”
How shall I love that word,
And oft repeat before the throne,
“ Forever with the Lord ! ”

Robert Southey.

1774-1843.

THE DEAD FRIEND.

Not to the grave, not to the grave, my soul,
 Descend to contemplate
The form that once was dear !
 The spirit is not there
Which kindled that dead eye,
Which throbbed in that cold heart,
Which in that motionless hand
 Hath met thy friendly grasp.
 The spirit is not there !
It is but lifeless, perishable flesh
 That moulders in the grave ;
Earth, air, and water's ministering particles,
 Now to the elements
Resolved, their uses done.
Not to the grave, not to the grave, my soul,
 Follow thy friend beloved ;
 The spirit is not there !

Often together have we talked of death ;
How sweet it were to see
All doubtful things made clear !
How sweet it were with powers
Such as the cherubim
To view the depth of heaven !
O, Edmund ! thou hast first
Begun the travel of eternity !
I look upon the stars,
And think that thou art there,
Unfettered as the thought that follows thee.

And we have often said how sweet it were,
With unseen ministry of angel power,
To watch the friends we loved.
Edmund ! we did not err !
Sure I have felt thy presence ! Thou hast given
A birth to holy thought,
Hast kept me from the world unstained and pure.
Edmund ! we did not err !
Our best affections here
They are not like the toys of infancy ;
The soul outgrows them not ;
We do not cast them off ;
O, if it could be so,
It were, indeed, a dreadful thing to die !

Not to the grave, not to the grave, my soul,
Follow thy friend beloved !
But in the lonely hour,

But in the evening walk,
Think that he accompanies thy solitude ;
Think that he holds with thee
Mysterious intercourse ;
And, though remembrance wake a tear,
There will be joy in grief.

GOOD THE BEGINNING, GOOD THE END.

HERE we see
The water at its well-head ; clear it is,
Not more transpicuous the invisible air ;
Pure as an infant's thoughts ; and here to life
And good directed all its uses serve.
The herb grows greener on its brink ; sweet flowers
Bend o'er the stream that feeds their freshened roots ;
The redbreast loves it for his wintry haunts,
And, when the buds begin to open forth,
Builds near it, with his mate, their brooding nest ;
The thirsty stag with widening nostrils there
Invigorated draws his copious draught ;
And there amid its flags the wild-boar stands,
Nor suffering wrong nor meditating hurt.
Through woodlands wide and solitary fields
Unsullied thus it holds its bounteous course ;
But when it reaches the resorts of men,
The service of the city there defiles
The tainted stream ; corrupt and foul it flows

Through loathsome banks and o'er a bed impure,
Till in the sea, the appointed end to which
Through all its way it hastens, 'tis received,
And, losing all pollution, mingles there
In the wide world of waters.

So is it

With the great stream of things, if all were seen ;
Good the beginning, good the end shall be,
And transitory evil only make
The good end happier. Ages pass away,
Thrones fall, and nations disappear, and worlds
Grow old and go to wreck ; the soul alone
Endures, and what she chooseth for herself,
The arbiter of her own destiny,
That only shall be permanent.

Mrs. Southey.

THERE IS A TONGUE IN EVERY LEAF.

THERE is a tongue in every leaf,
A voice in every rill ;
A voice that speaketh everywhere,
In flood and fire, through earth and air !
A tongue that's never still.

'Tis the Great Spirit wide diffused
Through everything we see,
That with our spirits communeth
Of things mysterious — Life and Death,
Time and Eternity !

I see Him in the blazing sun,
And in the thunder-cloud :
I hear Him in the mighty roar,
That rusheth through the forest hoar,
When winds are piping loud.

I see Him, hear Him, *everywhere*,
In *all things* — darkness, light,
Silence, and sound ; but most of all,
When slumber's dusky curtains fall,
At the dead hour of night.

I *feel* Him in the silent dews,
By grateful earth betrayed ;
I feel Him in the gentle showers,
The soft south wind, the breath of flowers,
The sunshine and the shade.

And yet (ungrateful that I am),
I've turned in sullen mood
From all these things, whereof He said,
When the great whole was finishéd,
That they were “ very good.”

My sadness on the loveliest things
Fell like unwholesome dew ;
The darkness that encompassed me,
The gloom I felt so palpably,
Mine own dark spirit threw.

Yet was He patient — slow to wrath,
Though every day provoked
By selfish, pining discontent,
Acceptance cold or negligent,
And promises revoked ;

And still the same rich feast was spread
For my insensate heart !
Not always so — I woke again
To join Creation's rapturous strain,
“ O Lord, how good Thou art.”

The clouds drew up, the shadows fled,
The glorious sun broke out,
And love, and hope, and gratitude,
Dispelled that miserable mood
Of darkness and of doubt.

THE PAUPER'S DEATH-BED.

TREAD softly — bow the head —
In reverent silence bow —
No passing bell doth toll —
Yet an immortal soul
Is passing now.

Stranger ! however great,
With holy reverence bow ;
There's one in that poor shed —
One by that paltry bed —
Greater than thou.

Beneath that beggar's roof,
Lo ! death doth keep his state ;

Enter — no crowds attend —
Enter — no guards defend
 This palace gate.

That pavement, damp and cold,
 No smiling courtiers tread :
One silent woman stands,
Lifting, with meagre hands,
 A dying head.

No mingling voices sound —
 An infant wail alone ;
A sob suppressed — again
That short, deep gasp, and then
 The parting groan.

Oh ! change — Oh ! wondrous change —
 Burst are the prison bars —
This moment, there, so low,
So agonized, and now
 Beyond the stars !

Oh ! change — stupendous change !
 There lies the soulless clod ;
The Sun eternal breaks —
The new immortal wakes —
 Wakes with his God !

LIFE AND DEATH.

Oh, fear not thou *to die!*
Far rather fear to live,— for life
Hath thousand snares thy faith to try,
 By peril, pain and strife.
 Brief is the work of death,
But life ! the spirit shrinks to see,
How full ere Heaven recalls the breath
 The cup of woe may be.

Oh, fear not thou to die !
No more, to suffer or to sin ;
No snares without thy faith to try,
 No traitor heart within ;
 But fear, oh rather fear,
The gay, the light, the changeful scene,
The flattering smiles that greet thee here,
 From Heaven thy heart to wean.

Fear lest, in evil hour,
Thy pure and holy hope o'ercome,
By clouds that in the horizon lower,
 Thy spirit feel the gloom
 Which over earth and Heaven
The covering throws of fell despair,
And deems itself the unforgiven,
 Predestined child of care.

Oh, fear not thou to die !
To die, and be that blessed one

Who in the bright and beauteous sky
May feel his conflict done ; —
May feel that never more
The tear of grief, of shame, shall come
For thousand wanderings from the power
Who loved and called him home.

THE INFANT'S REMOVAL.

God took thee in his mercy,
A lamb untasked, untried ;
He fought the fight for thee,
He won the victory,
And thou art sanctified !

I look around and see
The evil ways of men ;
And, O belovéd child !
I'm more than reconciled
To thy departure then.

Now, like a dewdrop shrined
Within a crystal stone,
Thou'rt safe in heaven, my dove, —
Safe with the Source of love,
The Everlasting One.

John Wilson.

1789.

MAGDALENE'S HYMN.

FROM "THE CITY OF THE PLAGUE."

THE air of death breathes through our souls,
The dead all round us lie ;
By day and night the death-bell tolls,
And says, " Prepare to die."

The face that in the morning sun
We thought so wond'rous fair,
Hath faded, ere his course was run,
Beneath its golden hair.

I see the old man in his grave,
With thin locks silvery-gray ;
I see the child's bright tresses wave
In the cold breath of clay.

The loving ones we loved the best,
Like music all are gone !
And the wan moonlight bathes in rest
Their monumental stone.

But not when the death-prayer is said
The life of life departs ;
The body in the grave is laid,
Its beauty in our hearts.

And holy midnight voices sweet
Like fragrance fill the room,
And happy ghosts with noiseless feet
Come bright'ning from the tomb.

We know who sends the visions bright,
From whose dear side they came !
— We veil our eyes before thy light,
We bless our Saviour's name !

This frame of dust, this feeble breath
The Plague may soon destroy ;
We think on Thee, and feel in death
A deep and awful joy.

Dim is the light of vanished years
In the glory yet to come ;
O idle grief ! O foolish tears !
When Jesus calls us home.

Like children for some bauble fair
That weep themselves to rest ;
We part with life — awake ! and there
The jewel in our breast !

CONSOLATION FROM GOD'S VISIBLE WORKS.

WITNESS Thou !

O Mighty One ! whose saving love has stolen
On the deep peace of moonbeams to my heart, —
Thou ! who with looks of mercy oft hast cheered
The starry silence, when, at noon of night,
On some wild mountain Thou hast not declined
The homage of Thy lonely worshipper, —
Bear witness, Thou ! that both in joy and grief,
The love of nature long hath been with me
The love of virtue : — that the solitude
Of the remotest hills to me hath been
Thy temple : — that the fountain's happy voice
Hath sung Thy goodness ; and Thy power has stunned
My spirit in the roaring cataract !

Oh ! how oft
In seasons of depression, — when the lamp
Of life burned dim, and all unpleasing thoughts
Subdued the proud aspirings of the soul, —
When doubts and fears withheld the timid eye
From scanning scenes to come, and a deep sense

Of human frailty turned the past to pain,—
How oft have I remembered that a world
Of glory lay around me,— that a source
Of lofty solace lay in every star ;
And that no being need behold the sun
And grieve, that knew Who hung him in the sky !

Thus unperceived I woke from heavy grief
To airy joy : and seeing that the mind
Of man, though still the image of his God,
Leaned by his will on various happiness,
I felt that all was good ; that faculties
Though low, might constitute, if rightly used,
True wisdom ; and when man hath here attained
The purpose of his being, he will sit
Near Mercy's throne, whether his course hath been
Prone on the earth's dim sphere, or, as with wing
Of viewless eagle, round the central blaze.

IMMORTAL HOPES.

O, WHAT were life,
Even in the warm and summer light of joy,
Without those hopes, that, like refreshing gales
At evening from the sea, come o'er the soul
Breathed from the ocean of eternity !
And O ! without them who could bear the storms

That fall in roaring blackness o'er the waters
Of agitated life. Then hopes arise
All round our sinking souls, like those fair birds,
O'er whose soft plumes the tempest has no power,
Waving their snow-white wings amid the darkness,
And wiling us, with gentle motion, on
To some calm island, on whose silvery strand,
Dropping at once, they fold their silent pinions,
And, as we touch the shores of paradise,
In love and beauty walk around our feet !

THE EVENING CLOUD.

A CLOUD lay cradled near the setting sun,
A gleam of crimson tinged its braided snow :
Long had I watched the glory moving on
O'er the still radiance of the Lake below.
Tranquil its spirit seemed : it floated slow ;
Even in its very motion, there was rest :
While every breath of eve that chanced to blow,
Wafted the traveller to the beauteous West.
Emblem, methought, of the departed soul !
To whose white robe the gleam of bliss is given ;
And, by the breath of Mercy, made to roll
Right onward to the golden gates of Heaven,
Where, to the eye of Faith, it peaceful lies
And tells to man his glorious destinies.

Leigh Hunt.

1784.

REFLECTIONS OF A SOUL ON DEATH.

SCENE. — *A female sitting by a bedside, anxiously looking at the face of her husband, just dead. The soul within the dead body soliloquizes.*

WHAT change is this! What joy! What depth of rest!

What suddenness of withdrawal from all pain
Into all bliss! into a balm so perfect
I do not even smile! I tried but now,
With that breath's end, to speak to the dear face
That watches me — and lo! all in an instant,
Instead of toil, and a weak, weltering tear,
I am all peace, all happiness, all power,
Laid on some throne in space. — Great God! I am
dead.

[*A pause.*] Dear God ! Thy love is perfect ; Thy truth known.

[*Another.*] And He,— and they !— How simple and strange ! How beautiful !

But I may whisper it not,— even to thought,
Lest strong imagination, hearing it,
Speak, and the world be shattered.

[*Soul again pauses.*] O balm ! O bliss ! O saturating smile

Unvanishing ! O doubt ended ! certainty
Begun ! O will, faultless, yet all indulged,
Encouraged to be wilful ;— to delay
Even its wings for heaven ;— and thus to rest
Here, here, ev'n here,— 'twixt heaven and earth
awhile,

A bed in the morn of endless happiness.

I feel warm drops falling upon my face ;
— My wife ! my love !— 'tis for the best thou canst not
Know how I know thee weeping, and how fond
A kiss meets thine in these unowning lips.

Ah, truly was my love what thou didst hope it,
And more ; and so was thine — I read it all —
And our small feuds were but impatiences
At seeing the dear truth ill understood.

Poor sweet ! thou blamest now thyself, and heapest
Memory on memory of imagined wrong,
As I should have done too,— as all who love ;
And yet I cannot pity thee :— so well
I know the end, and how thou'l smile hereafter.

She speaks my name at last, as though she feared
The terrible, familiar sound ; and sinks
In sobs upon my bosom. Hold me fast,
Hold me fast, sweet, and from the extreme grow
calm,—
Me cruelly unmoved, and yet how loving !

How wrong was I to quarrel with poor James !
And how dear Francis mistook *me* ! That pride,
How without ground it was ! Those arguments,
Which I supposed so final, O how foolish !
Yet gentlest Death will not permit rebuke,
Ev'n of one's self. They'll know all, as I know,
When they lie thus.

Colder I grow, and happier,
Warmness and sense are drawing to a point,
Ere they depart ;— myself quitting myself.
The soul gathers its wings upon the edge
Of the new world, yet how assuredly !
Oh ! how in balm I change ! actively willed,
Yet passive, quite ; and feeling opposites mingle
In exquisitest peace ! — Those fleshly clothes,
Which late I thought *myself*, lie more and more
Apart from this warm, sweet, retreating *me*,
Who am as a hand, withdrawing from a glove.

So lay my mother : so my father : so
My children : yet I pitied them. I wept,

And fancied them in their graves, and called them
“poor!”

O graves! O tears! O knowledge, will, and time,
And fear, and hope! what petty terms of earth
Were ye! yet how I love ye as of earth
The planet's household words; and how postpone,
Till out of these dear arms, th' immeasurable
Tongue of the all-possessing smile eternal!
Ah, not excluding these, nor aught that's past,
Nor aught that's present, nor that yet's to come,
Well waited for. I would not stir a finger
Out of this rest, to re-assure all anguish;
Such warrant hath it; such divine conjuncture;
Such a charm binds it with the needs of bliss.

That was my eldest boy's — that kiss. And that
The baby with its little unweening mouth;
And those — and those — Dear hearts! they have all
come,
And think me dead — me, who so know I'm living,
The vitalest creature in this fleshly room.
I part; and with my spirit's eyes full opened
Will look upon them.

[*Spirit parts from the body, and breathes upon their eyes.*

Patient be those tears,
Fresh heart-dews, standing on these dear clay-moulds.
I quit ye but
To meet again, and will revisit soon
In many a dream, and many a gentle sigh.

[*Spirit looks at the body.*

And was that *I*? — that hollow-cheeked, pale thing,
Shattered with passions, worn with cares : now placid
With my divine departure ? And must love
Think of thee painfully ? of stifling boards
'Gainst the free face, and of the irreverent worm ?
To dust with thee, poor corpse ! to dust and grass,
And the glad innocent worm, that does its duty
As thou dost thine in changing. I, thy life,—
Life of thy life ! — turn my face forth to Heaven !
O the infinitude and the eternity !
The rapid, angelical faces !
My mother ! . . .

AN ANGEL IN THE HOUSE.

How sweet it were, if, without feeble fright,
Or dying of the dreadful, beauteous sight,
An angel came to us, and we could bear
To see him issue from the silent air,
At evening, in our room, and bend on ours
His divine eyes, and bring us from his bowers
News of dear friends, and children who have never
Been dead indeed, as we shall know forever.
Alas ! we think not that we daily see
About our hearths angels that *are* to be,
Or may be, if they will, and we prepare
Their souls and ours to meet in happy air, —
A child, a friend, a wife, whose soft heart sings
In unison with ours, breeding its future wings.

ABOU BEN ADHEM AND THE ANGEL.

ABOU BEN ADHEM (may his tribe increase !)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel, writing in a book of gold :
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold ;
And to the presence in the room he said,
“ What writest thou ? ” The vision raised his head,
And, with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, “ The names of those who love the Lord.”
“ And is mine one ? ” said Abou. “ Nay, not so,”
Replied the angel. Abou spake more low,
But cheerily still ; and said, “ I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men.”
The angel wrote and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,
And lo ! Ben Adhem’s name led all the rest.

THE ROAD OF DEATH.

DEATH is a road our dearest friends have gone ;
Why, with such leaders, fear to say “ LEAD ON ? ”
Its gate repels, lest it too soon be tried ;
But turns in balm on the immortal side.
Mothers have passed it ; fathers ; children ; men,

Whose like we look not to behold again ;
Women, that smiled away their loving breath :—
Soft is the travelling on the road of Death !

But Guilt has passed it ? Men not fit to die !
Oh, hush — for He that made us all, is by !
Human were all ; all men ; all born of mothers ;
All our own selves, in the worn shape of others ;
Our *used* and oh ! be sure, not to be *ill-used* brothers.

PROVIDENCE.

FROM THE ITALIAN.

JUST as a mother, with sweet pious face,
Yearns towards her little children from her seat,
Gives one a kiss, another an embrace,
Takes this upon her knees, that on her feet ;
And while from actions, looks, complaints, pretences,
She learns their feelings and their various will,
To this a look, to that a word, dispenses,
And, whether stern or smiling, loves them still ;—
So Providence for us, high, infinite,
Makes our necessities its watchful task,
Hearks to all our prayers, helps all our wants,
And, even if it denies what seems our right,
Either denies because 'twould have us ask,
Or seems but to deny, or in denying grants.

Alphonse De Lamartine.

FROM "THE DEATH OF SOCRATES."

"Know'st thou the way to that invisible shore?"
Said Cebes: "Hath thine eye then scanned it o'er?"
— "Friends, to that world my steps are drawing near,
More and more clearly I its music hear,
And to behold its scenes with open eye —"
— "What, must we?" Phedon said. — "Be pure
and die!"

There is, somewhere in the immense expanse,
To mortals inaccessible, perchance
Far overhead beyond the arching skies,
Perchance around us, here, on earth, it lies,
Another world, a heaven, an Elysium, where
Not streams of honey glide through amber fair,
Nor virtuous souls, by God alone renewed,
Drink nectar and partake ambrosial food,
But sainted shades, immortal spirits come

To take the crown of earthly martyrdom !
Neither dark Tempé, nor the laughing height
Of Menelus, when morning's rosy light
Plays round it, and her breath with perfumes rare
Fills all the fresh, intoxicating air,
The vales of Hemus, nor the rich hill-sides
Where, with sweet murmurings, Eurotas glides,
Nor yet that land, the poets' chosen shore,
Where the charmed traveller thinks of home no more,
Not all of these can match that blest abode
Where the soul's daylight is the look of God !
Where night can never come, nor night of death,
Where in love's atmosphere the soul draws breath !
Where bodies that ne'er die, or die to live,
For finer pleasures finer senses give ! ”

— “ What ! bodies ev'n in heaven ? side by side,
Death ranged with life ? ” — “ Yes, bodies glorified
By the transfiguring soul, who, to compose
These heavenly vestments, through creation goes,
Culling the flower of the elements ;
All that is present in the world of sense,
The tender rays of the transparent light,
The softest tints that blend in solar white,
The sweetest scents exhaled by evening flowers,
The murmured cadences at midnight hours,
Borne by the amorous zephyr through the trees,
Or o'er the bosom of the sighing seas,
The flame that shoots in jets of blue and gold,
Crystal of streams beneath a pure sky rolled,

The purple tinge Aurora gives her sails,
When first they flutter in the morning gales,
The rays of tremulous stars that, imaged, sleep
On the calm mirror of the silent deep,—
All, blended, form beneath her plastic hand
A body pliant to the soul's command,
And she who, once bound down with many a chain,
'Gainst her revolted senses warred in vain,
To-day, triumphant o'er her indolence,
Majestically rules the world of sense,
Creates new senses, pleasures, endlessly,
And plays with space, time, life, creation — free !

* * * He seemed to slumber in a dream's embrace.
The intrepid Cebes, gazing in his face,
By every art of yearning friendship tries
To summon back into his fading eyes
The soul fast parting with the feeble breath,
And questions him e'en on the brink of death :
“ Sleep'st thou ? Is death a slumber ? Speak ! ” he
cried.
Gathering his energies, the sage replied :
“ It is a waking ! ” . . . “ Veiled are not thine eyes
With funeral shadows ? ” . . . “ No ; I see arise
Amidst the shades a pure and heavenly day ! ” . . .
“ Hear'st thou no groans — no lamentations ? ” . . .
“ Nay ;
But stars of gold that, as in heaven they flame,
Murmur in circling choir a holy name ! ” . . .

“ What feelest thou ? ” . . . “ What the young Chrysalis
 feels, when she bursts her coil, in freedom’s bliss !
And as the light of morning greets her eyes,
The breath of morning wafts her through the skies ! ” —
“ And hast thou taught us truth ? The soul . . . ?
 reply ! . . . ”
“ Believe this smile ; the soul shall never die ! . . . ”
“ What waitest thou, that thou from earth may’st
 flee ? ” . . .
“ A breath, as waits the ship, impatient for the
 sea ! ” . . .
“ Whence shall it come ? ” “ From heaven ! ” . . .
“ Yet one word more ! ” . . .
“ No ; leave my soul alone, in peace to soar ! ”

Dr. Chatfield.

MUSINGS IN THE TEMPLE OF NATURE.

MAN can build nothing worthy of his Maker,—
From royal Solomon's stupendous fane,
Down to the humble chapel of the Quaker,
All, all are vain.

The wondrous world which He himself created
Is the fit temple of creation's Lord ;
There may His worship best be celebrated,
And praises poured.

Its altar, earth ; its roof, the sky untainted ;
Sun, moon, and stars, are lamps that give it light ;
And clouds, by the celestial Artist painted,
Its pictures bright.

Its choir, all vocal things, whose glad devotion
In one united hymn is heavenward sped ;
The thunder-peal, the winds, the deep-mouthing ocean,
Its organ dread !

The face of Nature its God-written Bible,
Which all mankind may study and explore,
While none can wrest, interpolate, or libel
Its living lore.

Hence learn we that our Maker, whose affection
Knows no distinction, suffers no recall,
Sheds His impartial favor and protection
Alike on all.

Thus by Divine example do we gather,
That every race should love alike all others ;
Christian, Jew, Pagan, children of one Father,
All, all are brothers !

Conscience, Heaven's silent oracle, the assessor
Of right and wrong in every human breast,
Sternly condemns the impenitent transgressor
To live unblest.

The pious and the virtuous, though assaulted
By fortune's frown, or man's unjust decrees,
Still in their bosoms find a pure, exalted,
Unfailing peace !

Hence do we learn that hardened vice is hateful,
Since Heaven pursues it with avenging rod ;
While goodness, self-rewarded, must be grateful
To man and God.

O ! Thou most visible, yet unseen Teacher,
Whose finger writes its lessons on our sphere,
O ! Thou most audible, but unheard Preacher,
Whose sermons clear

Are seen and read in all that Thou performest,
Wilt Thou look down and bless, if, when I kneel,
Apart from man-built fanes, I feel the warmest
And purest zeal ?

If in the temple Thine own hands have fashioned,
'Neath the bright sky, by lonely stream or wood,
I pour to Thee, with thrilling heart impassioned,
My gratitude ?

If in Thy present miracles terrestrial
Mine eyes behold, wherever I have kneeled,
New proofs of the futurity celestial
To man revealed ?

If, fearing Thee, I love the whole creation,
Keeping my bosom undefiled by guilt,
Wilt Thou receive and bless mine adoration ?
Thou wilt, Thou wilt !

Sir E. Bulwer Lytton.

REPOSE IN FAITH.

BEHOLD the storm-beat wanderer in repose !
He lists the sounds at which the Heavens unclose !
Gleam, through expanding bars, the angel-wings,
And floats the music borne from seraph-strings !
Holy the oldest creed which Nature gives,
Proclaiming God where'er Creation lives ;
But *there* the doubt will come ! — the clear design
Attests the Maker and suggests the Shrine ;
But in that visible harmonious plan,
What present shows the *future* world to man ?
What lore detects, beneath our crumbling clay,
A soul exiled, and journeying back to-day ;
What knowledge, in the bones of charnel urns,
The ethereal spark, the undying thought, discerns ?
How from the universal war, the prey
Of life on life, can Love explore the way ?

Search the material tribes of earth, sea, air,
And the fierce SELF that strives and slays is there.
What but that SELF do Man and Nature teach ?
Where the charmed link that binds the all to each ?
Where the sweet law — (doth Nature boast its birth ?) —
“ Good will to man, and charity to earth ? ”

Not in the world *without*, but that *within*,
Revealed, not instinct — soul from sense can win !
And where the Natural halts, where cramped, confined,
The seen horizon bounds the baffled mind,
The Inspired begins — the onward march is given ;
Bridging all space, nor ending ev'n in Heaven !
There, veiled on earth, we mark divinely clear,
Duty and end — the *There* explains the *Here* !
We see the link that binds the future band,
Foeman with foeman gliding hand in hand ;
And feel that Hate is but an hour's — the Son
Of earth, to perish when the earth is done —
But Love eternal ; and we turn below,
To hail the brother where we loathed the foe :
There, in the soft and beautiful Belief,
Flows the true Lethé for the lips of Grief ;
There, Penury, Hunger, Misery, cast their eyes,
How soon the bright Republic of the Skies !
There, Love, heart-broken, sees prepared the bower,
And hears the bridal step, and waits the nuptial hour !
There, smiles the mother, we have wept ! there bloom
Again the buds asleep within the tomb ;
There, o'er bright gates inscribed, “ **NO MORE TO PART,** ”
Soul springs to soul, and heart unites to heart !

Bernard Barton.

1784-1849.

THE LAND WHICH NO MORTAL MAY KNOW.

THOUGH earth has full many a beautiful spot,
As a poet or painter might show ;
Yet more lovely and beautiful, holy and bright,
To the hopes of the heart and the spirit's glad sight,
Is the land that no mortal may know.

There the crystalline stream, bursting forth from the
throne,
Flows on, and forever will flow ;
Its waves, as they roll, are with melody rife,
And its waters are sparkling with beauty and life,
In the land which no mortal may know.

And there, on its margin, with leaves ever green,
With its fruits healing sickness and woe,

The fair tree of life, in its glory and pride,
Is fed by that deep, inexhaustible tide,
 Of the land which no mortal may know.

There too are the lost ! whom we loved on this earth,
 With whose mem'ries our bosoms yet glow ;
Their reliques we gave to the place of the dead,
But their glorified spirits before us have fled
 To the land which no mortal may know.

Oh ! who but must pine in this dark vale of tears,
 From its clouds and its shadows to go,
To walk in the light of the glory above,
And to share in the peace, and the joy, and the love,
 Of the land which no mortal may know !

TOO LATE.

BITTER the anguish with these two words blended,
 For those contemplating their hopeless lot,
Who find life's summer past,— its harvest ended,—
 And winter nigh, while they are gathered not.

Yet do Thou, Lord, by Thy supreme conviction,
 Give them to feel that, though their sins are great,
Thy love and mercy own not our restriction,
 But that with *Thee*, it NEVER IS TOO LATE !

FAITH, HOPE, AND CHARITY.

STILL abide the heaven-born Three,
Faith, and Hope, and Charity !
Faith — to point our heavenly goal,
Hope — an anchor to the soul :
Faith and Hope must pass away ;
Charity endures for aye !

Hope must in possession die ;
Faith — in blissful certainty ;
These to gladden each were given ;
Love, or Charity — for Heaven !
For, in brighter realms above,
Charity survives — as Love.

Love to Him, the great I AM !
Love to Him, the atoning Lamb !
Love unto the Holy Ghost !
Love to all the heavenly host !
Love to all the human race,
SANCTIFIED BY SAVING GRACE ! .

In that pure and perfect love,
Treasured up for Heaven above.
Christian ! may thy grateful heart
Have its everlasting part ;
And when Faith and Hope are mute,
Find in endless Love their fruit !

SIGNS AND TOKENS.

HE who watches winds that blow,
May too long neglect to sow ;
He who waits lest clouds should rain,
Harvest never shall obtain.

Signs and tokens false may prove ;
Trust thou in a Saviour's love,
In His sacrifice for sin,
And His Spirit's power within.

Keep thou Zion-ward thy face,
Ask in faith the aid of grace,
Use the strength which grace shall give
Die to self — in Christ to live.

Faith in God, if such be thine,
Shall be found thy safest sign,
And obedience to His will
Prove the best of tokens still.

FAREWELL.

NAY, shrink not from the word “ farewell ! ”
As if 'twere friendship's final knell ;
Such fears may prove but vain :

So changeful is life's fleeting day,
Whene'er we sever — hope may say
“ We part *to meet again!* ”

Even the last parting earth can know,
Brings not unutterable woe,
To souls that heavenward soar ;
For humble Faith, with steadfast eye,
Points to a brighter world on high,
Where hearts that here at parting sigh,
May meet — *to part no more.*

Thomas Moore.

1780-1852.

COMFORT IN AFFLICION.

Oh ! Thou who dry'st the mourner's tear,
How dark this world would be,
If, when deceived and wounded here,
We could not fly to Thee !
The friends who in our sunshine live,
When winter comes, are flown ;
And he who has but tears to give,
Must weep those tears alone ;
But Thou wilt heal that broken heart,
Which, like the plants that throw
Their fragrance from the wounded part,
Breathes sweetness out of woe.

When joy no longer soothes or cheers,
And even the hope that threw
A moment's sparkle o'er our tears,
Is dimmed and vanished too,—
Oh who would bear life's stormy doom,
Did not Thy wing of love
Come brightly wafting through the gloom
Our peace-branch from above !
Then sorrow touched by Thee grows bright,
With more than rapture's ray ;
As darkness shows us worlds of light
We never saw by day.

BUT WHO SHALL SEE.

But who shall see the glorious day
When, throned on Zion's brow,
The Lord shall rend that veil away
Which hides the nations now ?
When earth no more beneath the fear
Of His rebuke shall lie ;
When pain shall cease, and every tear
Be wiped from ev'ry eye.

Then, Judah, thou no more shalt mourn
Beneath the heathen's chain ;
Thy days of splendor shall return,
And all be new again.

The Fount of Life shall then be quaffed
In peace, by all who come ;
And every wind that blows shall waft
Some long-lost exile home.

BLISS OF HEAVEN.

Go, wing thy flight from star to star,
From world to luminous world as far
As the universe spreads its flaming wall :
Take all the pleasures of all the spheres,
And multiply each through endless years,
One minute of heaven is worth them all.

William Cullen Bryant.

1794.

THE RETURN OF YOUTH.

My friend, thou sorrowest for thy golden prime,
For thy fair youthful years too swift of flight.
Thou musest, with wet eyes, upon the time
Of cheerful hopes that filled the world with light,—
Years when thy heart was bold, thy hand was strong,
And quick the thought that moved thy tongue to
speak,
And willing faith was thine, and scorn of wrong
Summoned the sudden crimson to thy cheek.

Thou lookest forward on the coming days,
Shuddering to feel their shadow o'er thee creep.
A path, thick-set with changes and decays
Slopes downward to the place of common sleep ;

And they who walked with thee in life's first stage,
Leave, one by one, thy side, and, waiting near,
Thou seest the sad companions of thy age —
Dull love of rest, and weariness and fear.

Yet grieve thou not, nor think thy youth is gone,
Nor deem that glorious season e'er could die.
Thy pleasant youth, a little while withdrawn,
Waits on the horizon of a brighter sky ;
Waits, like the morn, that folds her wing and hides,
Till the slow stars bring back her dawning hour ;
Waits, like the vanished spring, that slumbering bides
Her own sweet time to waken bud and flower.

There shall He welcome thee, when thou shalt stand
On His bright morning hills, with smiles more sweet
Than when at first He took thee by the hand,
Through the fair earth to lead thy tender feet !
He shall bring back, but brighter, broader still,
Life's early glory to thine eyes again ;
Shall clothe thy spirit with new strength, and fill
Thy leaping heart with warmer love than then.

Hast thou not glimpses, in the twilight here,
Of mountains where immortal morn prevails ?
Comes there not, through the silence, to thine ear
A gentle rustling of the morning gales ;
A murmur, wafted from that glorious shore,
Of streams that water banks forever fair,
And voices of the loved ones gone before,
More musical in that celestial air ?

James Thomson.

1700-1748.

GOD'S UNIVERSAL LOVE.

His praise, ye brooks, attune, ye trembling rills ;
And let me catch it as I muse along.
Ye headlong torrents, rapid, and profound ;
Ye softer floods, that lead the humid maze
Along the vale : and thou, majestic main,
A secret world of wonders in thyself,
Sound His stupendous praise ; whose greater voice
Or bids you roar, or bids your roarings fall.
Soft roll your incense, herbs, and fruits, and flowers,
In mingled clouds to Him ; whose sun exalts,
Whose breath perfumes you, and whose pencil paints.
Ye forests bend, ye harvests wave, to Him ;
Breathe your still song into the reaper's heart,
As home he goes beneath the joyous moon.
Ye that keep watch in heaven, as earth asleep

Unconscious lies, effuse your mildest beams,
Ye constellations, while your angels strike,
Amid the spangled sky, the silver lyre.
Great source of day ! best image here below
Of thy Creator, ever pouring wide,
From world to world, the vital ocean round,
On Nature write with every beam His praise.

The thunder rolls : be hushed the prostrate world,
While cloud to cloud returns the solemn hymn.
Bleat out afresh, ye hills : ye mossy rocks,
Retain the sound : the broad responsive low
Ye valleys, raise ; for the GREAT SHEPHERD reigns ;
AND HIS UNSUFFERING KINGDOM YET WILL COME!....

Should fate command me to the farthest verge
Of the green earth, to distant barbarous climes,
Rivers unknown to song ; where first the sun
Gilds Indian mountains, or his setting beam
Flames on the Atlantic isles ; 'tis nought to me :
Since God is ever present, ever felt,
In the void waste as in the city full ;
And where He vital breathes there must be joy.
When even at last the solemn hour shall come,
And wing my mystic flight to future worlds,
I cheerful will obey ; there, with new powers,
Will rising wonders sing : I cannot go
Where Universal Love not smiles around,
Sustaining all yon orbs, and all their suns ;
FROM SEEMING EVIL STILL EDUCING GOOD,

And better thence again, and better still,
In infinite progression. But I lose
Myself in **HIM**, in Light ineffable !
Come, then, expressive silence, muse His praise.

MORAL OF THE SEASONS.

'Tis done ! dread Winter spreads his latest glooms,
And reigns tremendous o'er the conquered year.
How dead the vegetable kingdom lies !
How dumb the tuneful ! horror wide extends
His desolate domain. Behold, fond man !
See here thy pictured life ; pass some few years,
Thy flowering Spring, thy Summer's ardent strength,
Thy sober Autumn fading into age,
And pale concluding Winter comes at last,
And shuts the scene. Ah ! whither now are fled
Those dreams of greatness ? those unsolid hopes
Of happiness ? those longings after fame ?
Those restless cares ? those busy bustling days ?
Those gay-spent, festive nights ? those veering thoughts,
Lost between good and ill, that shared thy life ?
All now are vanished ! Virtue sole survives,
Immortal, never-failing friend of man,
His guide to happiness on high. And see !
'Tis come, the glorious morn ! the second birth
Of heaven and earth ! awakening Nature hears
The new-creating word, and starts to life,

In every heightened form, **FROM PAIN AND DEATH FOREVER FREE.** The great eternal scheme,
Involving all, and in a perfect whole
Uniting, as the prospect wider spreads,
To reason's eye refined clears up apace.
Ye vainly wise ! ye blind presumptuous ! now,
Confounded in the dust, adore that Power
And Wisdom oft arraigned : see now the cause,
Why unassuming worth in secret lived,
And died, neglected : why the good man's share
In life was gall and bitterness of soul :
Why the lone widow and her orphans pined
In starving solitude ; while Luxury,
In palaces, lay straining her low thought,
To form unreal wants : why heaven-born truth
And moderation fair, wore the red marks
Of superstition's scourge : why licensed pain,
That cruel spoiler, that embosomed foe,
Embittered all our bliss. Ye good distressed !
Ye noble few ! who here unbending stand
Beneath life's pressure, yet bear up a while,
And what your bounded view, which only saw
A little part, deemed evil,— is no more :
The storms of Wintry Time will quickly pass,
AND ONE UNBOUNDED SPRING ENCIRCLE ALL !

Sir John Davies.

1570-1626.

THE SOUL'S HIGH DESTINY.

O IGNORANT poor man ! what dost thou bear
Locked up within the casket of thy breast ?
What jewels, and what riches hast thou there ?
What heavenly treasure in so weak a chest ?

Look in thy soul, and thou shalt beauties find,
Like those which drowned Narcissus in the flood :
Honor and pleasure both are in thy mind,
And all that in the world is counted good.

Think of her worth, and think that God did mean
This worthy mind should worthy things embrace :
Blot not her beauties with thy thoughts unclean,
Nor her dishonor with thy passion base.

Kill not her quickening power with surfeitings ;
Mar not her sense with sensuality ;
Cast not away her wit on idle things ;
Make not her free-will slave to vanity.

And when thou think'st of her eternity,
Think not that death against her nature is :
Think it a birth ; and, when thou goest to die,
Sing like a swan as if thou wentst to bliss !

REASONS FOR THE SOUL'S IMMORTALITY.

AGAIN, how can she but immortal be,
When, with the motions of both will and wit,
She still aspireth to eternity,
And never rests till she attain to it ?

All moving things to other things do move
Of the same kind, which shows their nature such ;
So earth falls down, and fire doth mount above,
Till both their proper elements do touch.

And as the moisture which the thirsty earth
Sucks from the sea to fill her empty veins,
From out her womb at last doth take a birth,
And runs, a lymph, along the grassy plains,

Long doth she stay, as loth to leave the land
From whose soft side she first did issue make ;
She tastes all places, turns to every hand,
Her flowery banks unwilling to forsake.

Yet nature so her streams doth lead and carry
As that her course doth make no final stay,
Till she herself unto the sea doth marry,
Within whose watery bosom first she lay.

E'en so the soul, which, in this earthly mould,
The spirit of God doth secretly infuse,
Because, at first, she doth the earth behold,
And only this material world she views,

At first, her mother earth she holdeth dear,
And doth embrace the world and worldly things ;
She flies close by the ground, and hovers here,
And mounts not up, with her celestial wings ;—

Yet, under heaven, she cannot light on aught
That with her heavenly nature doth agree ;
She cannot rest, she cannot fix her thought,
She cannot in this world contented be.

For who did ever yet, in honor, wealth,
Or pleasure of the sense, contentment find ?
Who ever ceased to wish, when he had health ?
Or, having wisdom, was not vexed in mind ?

Then, as a bee, which among weeds doth fall,
Which seem sweet flowers with lustre fresh and gay,
She lights on that, and this, and tasteth all,
But, pleased with none, doth rise and soar away —

So, when the soul finds here no true content,
And, like Noah's dove, can no sure footing take,
She doth return from whence she first was sent,
And flies to Him that first her wings did make.

AFFLICTION'S TEACHINGS.

If aught can teach us aught, affliction's looks
(Making us pry into ourselves so near)
Teach us to know ourselves beyond all books,
Or all the learnéd schools that ever were.

She within lists my ranging mind hath brought,
That now beyond myself I will not go :
Myself am centre of my circling thought :
Only myself I study, learn, and know.

I know my life's a pain, and but a span ;
I know my sense is mocked in every thing ;
And, to conclude, I know myself a man,
Which is a proud and yet a wretched thing.

Reginald Heber.

1783-1826.

GOD PROVIDETH FOR THE MORROW.

Lo ! the lilies of the field,
How their leaves instruction yield !
Hark to Nature's lesson given
By the blesséd birds of Heaven.
Every bush and tufted tree
Warbles sweet philosophy, —
“ Mortal, fly from doubt and sorrow :
God provideth for the morrow !

“ Say, with richer crimson glows
The kingly mantle than the rose ?
Say, have kings more wholesome fare
Than we poor citizens of air ?
Barns nor hoarded grain have we,
Yet we carol merrily, —

Mortal, fly from doubt and sorrow,
God provideth for the morrow !

“ One there lives whose guardian eye
Guides our humble destiny ;
One there lives, who, Lord of all,
Keeps our feathers lest they fall ;
Pass we blithely, then, the time,
Fearless of the snare and lime,
Free from doubt and faithless sorrow ;
God provideth for the morrow ! ”

ON THE DEATH OF A BROTHER.

THOU art gone to the grave, but we will not deplore thee,
Though sorrows and darkness encompass the tomb ;
Thy Saviour has passed through its portals before thee,
And the lamp of His love is thy guide through the
gloom !

Thou art gone to the grave ! we no longer behold thee,
Nor tread the rough paths of the world by thy side ;
But the wide arms of mercy are spread to enfold thee,
And sinners may die, for the sinless has died !

Thou art gone to the grave ! and, its mansion for-
saking,
Perchance thy weak spirit in fear lingered long ;

But the mild rays of Paradise beamed on thy waking,
And the sound which thou heardst was the seraphim's song !

Thou art gone to the grave, but we will not deplore thee,
Whose God was thy ransom, thy guardian, and guide ;
He gave thee, He took thee, and He will restore thee,
And death has no sting, for the Saviour has died.

THE WIDOW OF NAIN AND HER SON.

WAKE not, oh mother ! sounds of lamentation !
Weep not, oh widow ! weep not hopelessly !
Strong is His arm, the Bringer of salvation,
Strong is the Word of God to succor thee !

Bear forth the cold corpse, slowly, slowly bear him :
Hide his pale features with the sable pall :
Chide not the sad one wildly weeping near him :
Widowed and childless, she has lost her all.

Why pause the mourners ? Who forbids our weeping ?
Who the dark pomp of sorrow has delayed ?
“ Set down the bier — he is not dead but sleeping !
“ Young man, arise ! ” — He spake, and was obeyed !

Change then, oh sad one, grief to exultation :
Worship and fall before Messiah's knee,
Strong was His arm, the Bringer of salvation ;
Strong was the Word of God to succor thee !

WHAT IS RELIGION ? *

Is it to go to church today,
To look devout and seem to pray,
And ere tomorrow's sun goes down
Be dealing slander through the town ?

Does every sanctimonious face
Denote the certain reign of grace ?
Does not a phiz that scowls at sin
Oft veil hypocrisy within ?

Is it to take our daily walk,
And of our own good deeds to talk,
Yet often practice secret crime,
And thus misspend our precious time ?

Is it for sect and creed to fight,
To call our zeal the rule of right,
When what we wish is, at the best,
To see our church excel the rest ?

* A juvenile production.

Is it to wear the Christian dress,
And love to all mankind profess,
To treat with scorn the humble poor,
And bar against them every door ?

Oh, no ! religion means not this,
Its fruit more sweet and fairer is ,
Its precept's this — to others do
As you would have them do to you.

It grieves to hear an ill report,
And scorns with human woes to sport,
Of others' deeds it speaks no ill,
But tells of good, or else keeps still.

And does religion this impart ?
Then may its influence fill my heart !
Oh ! haste the blissful, joyful day,
When all the world may own its sway.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

COWPER'S GRAVE.

IT is a place where poets crowned
 May feel the heart's decaying,—
It is a place where happy saints
 May weep amid their praying :
Yet let the grief and humbleness,
 As low as silence, languish !
Earth surely now may give her calm
 To whom she gave her anguish.

O poets ! from a maniac's tongue,
 Was poured the deathless singing !
O Christians ! at your cross of hope,
 A hopeless hand was clinging !
O men ! this man, in brotherhood,
 Your weary paths beguiling,

Groaned inly while he taught you peace,
And died while ye were smiling.

And now, what time ye all may read
Through dimming tears his story,
How discord on the music fell
And darkness on the glory,
And how, when one by one, sweet sounds
And wandering lights departed,
He wore no less a loving face
Because so broken-hearted ;

He shall be strong to sanctify
The poet's high vocation,
And bow the meekest Christian down
In meeker adoration ;
Nor ever shall he be, in praise,
By wise or good forsaken ;
Named softly, as the household name
Of one whom God hath taken.

With quiet sadness and no gloom,
I learn to think upon him,
With meekness that is gratefulness
To God whose heaven has won him —
Who suffered once the madness-cloud,
To His own love to blind him ;
But gently led the blind along
Where breath and bird could find him ;

And wrought within his shattered brain,
Such quick poetic senses,
As hills have language for, and stars,
Harmonious influences !
The pulse of dew upon the grass
Kept him within its number ;
And silent shadows from the trees
Refreshed him like a slumber.

Wild timid hares were drawn from woods
To share his home-caresses,
Uplooking to his human eyes
With sylvan tendernesses :
The very world, by God's constraint,
From falsehood's ways removing,
Its women and its men became
Beside him, true and loving.

But while in blindness he remained
Unconscious of the guiding,
And things provided came without
The sweet sense of providing,
He testified this solemn truth,
Though frenzy desolated —
Nor man, nor nature satisfy,
Whom only God created !

Like a sick child that knoweth not
His mother while she blesses

And drops upon his burning brow
The coolness of her kisses,—
That turns his fevered eyes around—
“ My mother ! where’s my mother ? ” —
As if such tender words and looks
Could come from any other ! —

The fever gone, with leaps of heart,
He sees her bending o’er him ;
Her face all pale from watchful love,
The unwearied love she bore him ! —
Thus, woke the poet from the dream,
His life’s long fever gave him,
Beneath those deep pathetic Eyes,
Which closed in death, to save him !

Thus ? oh, not *thus* ! no type of earth
Could image that awaking,
Wherein he scarcely heard the chant
Of seraphs, round him breaking,
Or felt the new immortal throb
Of soul from body parted ;
But felt *those eyes alone*, and knew
My Saviour ! not deserted !

Deserted ! who hath dreamt that when
The Cross in darkness rested,
Upon the Victim’s hidden face,
No love was manifested ?

What frantic hands outstretched have e'er
The atoning drops averted,
What tears have washed them from the soul,
That *one* should be deserted ?

Deserted ! God could separate
From His own essence rather :
And Adam's sins *have* swept between
The righteous Son and Father ;
Yea, once, Immanuel's orphaned cry,
His universe hath shaken —
It went up single, echoless,
“ My God, I am forsaken ! ”

It went up from the Holy's lips
Amid His lost creation,
That, of the lost, no son should use
Those words of desolation ;
That earth's worst frenzies, marring hope,
Should mar not hope's fruition,
And I, on Cowper's grave, should see
His rapture, in a vision !

CHEERFULNESS.

I THINK we are too ready with complaint
In this fair world of God's. Had we no hope
Indeed beyond the zenith and the cope

Of yon gray blank of sky, we might be fain
To muse upon eternity's constraint
Round our aspirant souls. But since the scope
Must widen early, is it well to droop
For a few days consumed in loss and faint ?
O pusillanimous Heart, be comforted ;
And like a cheerful traveller, take the road,
Singing beside the hedge. What if the bread
Be bitter in thine inn, and thou unshod
To meet the flints ? At least it may be said,
“ Because the way is short, I thank Thee, God ! ”

Oliver Wendell Holmes.

GOD IS LOVE.

. . . . Or is our being's only end and aim
To add new glories to our Maker's name,
As the poor insect, shrivelling in the blaze,
Lends a faint sparkle to its streaming rays?
Does earth send upwards to the Eternal's ear
The mingled discords of her jarring sphere
To swell His anthem, while Creation rings
With notes of anguish from its shattered strings?
Is it for this the immortal Artist means
These conscious, throbbing, agonized machines?

Dark is the soul whose sullen creed can bind
In chains like these the all-embracing mind;
No! two-faced bigot! thou dost ill reprove
The sensual selfish, yet benignant Jove,

And praise a tyrant throned in lonely pride,
Who loves himself, and cares for nought beside ;
Who gave thee, summoned from primeval night,
A thousand laws, and not a single right ;
A heart to feel and quivering nerves to thrill,
The sense of wrong, the death-defying will ;
Who girt thy senses with this goodly frame,
Its earthly glories and its orbs of flame,
Not for thyself, unworthy of a thought,
Poor helpless victim of a life unsought,
But all for him, unchanging and supreme,
The heartless centre of thy frozen scheme !

Trust not the teacher with his lying scroll,
Who tears the charter of thy shuddering soul ;
The God of love, who gave the life that warms
All breathing dust in all its varied forms,
Asks not the tribute of a world like this
To fill the measure of His perfect bliss.

Though winged with life through all its radiant shores,
Creation flowed with unexhausted stores,
Cherub and seraph had not yet *enjoyed* !
For this He called thee from the quickening void !
Nor this alone ; a larger gift was thine,
A mightier purpose swelled His vast design ;
Thought ; conscience ; will ; to make them all thine
own
He rent a pillar from the eternal throne !

Made in His image, thou must nobly dare
The thorny crown of sovereignty to share ;
With eye uplifted it is thine to view
From thine own centre, Heaven's o'erarching blue ;
So round thy heart a beaming circle lies
No fiend can blot, no hypocrite disguise,
From all its orbs one cheering voice is heard,
Full to thine ear it bears the Father's word,
Now, as in Eden where His first-born trod :
“ Seek thine own welfare, true to man and God ! ”

Think not too meanly of thy low estate ;
Thou hast a choice ; to choose is to create !
Remember whose the sacred lips that tell,
Angels approve thee when thy choice is well ;
Remember, One, a judge of righteous men,
Sware to spare Sodom if she held but ten !
Use well the freedom which the Master gave,
(Think'st thou that Heaven can tolerate a slave ?)
And He who made thee to be just and true
Will bless thee, love thee,— ay, respect thee too !

Alexander Pope.

1688-1744.

VIRTUE THE SOLE HAPPINESS HERE AND
HEREAFTER.

KNOW then this truth — (enough for man to know!) —

VIRTUE ALONE IS HAPPINESS BELOW.

The only point where human bliss stands still,

And tastes the good without the fall to ill ;

Where only merit constant pay receives,

Is blest in what it takes, and what it gives ;

The joy unequalled, if its end it gain,

And if it lose, attended with no pain :

Without satiety, though e'er so blest,

And but more relished as the more distressed :

The broadest mirth unfeeling Folly wears,

Less pleasing far than Virtue's very tears ;

Good, from each object, from each place acquired,

Forever exercised, yet never tired ;

Never elated, while one man's oppressed ;
Never dejected, while another's blest ;
And where no wants, no wishes can remain,
Since but to wish more virtue, is to gain.

See the sole bliss Heaven could on all bestow !
Which who but feels can taste, but thinks can know :
Yet poor with fortune, and with learning blind,
The bad must miss ; the good, untaught, will find ;
Slave to no sect, who takes no private road,
But looks through Nature, up to Nature's God,—
Pursues that chain, which links th' immense design,
Joins Heaven and Earth, and mortal and divine,—
Sees that no being any bliss can know,
But touches some above and some below,—
Learns from this union of the rising whole
The first, last purpose of the human soul,
And knows where faith, law, morals, all began,
All end,— in love of God and love of man !
For him alone, Hope leads from goal to goal
And opens still, and opens on his soul :
Till lengthened on to Faith, and unconfin'd,
It pours the bliss that fills up all the mind.
He sees why Nature plants in man alone
Hope of known bliss, and faith in bliss unknown :
(Nature, whose dictates to no other kind
Are given in vain, but what they seek they find ;)
Wise is her present ; she connects in this
His greatest virtue with his greatest bliss ;
At once his own bright prospect to be blest,
And strongest motive to assist the rest.

Self-love thus pushed to social, to divine,
Gives thee to make thy neighbor's blessing thine.
Is this too little for the boundless heart ?
Extend it — let thy enemies have part.
Grasp the whole world of reason, life, and sense,
In one close system of benevolence :
Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree,
And height of bliss but height of charity.

God loves from whole to parts ; but human soul
Must rise from individual to the whole.
Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake ;
The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds,
Another still, and still another spreads ;
Friend, parent, neighbor, first it will embrace ;
His country next ; and next all human race ;
Wide and more wide, th' o'erflowings of the mind
Take every creature in, of every kind ;
Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,
And Heaven beholds its image in his breast.

THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

FATHER of all ! in every age,
In every clime adored,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord !

Thou great First Cause ! least understood ;
Who all my sense confined,
To know but this, — that Thou art good,
And that myself am blind ; —

Yet gave me, in this dark estate,
To see the good from ill ;
And, binding nature fast in fate,
Let free the human will ; —

What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This teach me, more than hell, to shun,
That, more than heaven, pursue.

What blessings Thy free bounty gives
Let me not cast away ;
For God is paid when man receives ;
T' enjoy is to obey.

Yet not to earth's contracted span
Thy goodness let me bound ;
Or think Thee Lord alone of man,
When thousand worlds are round.

Let not this weak, unknowing hand
Presume Thy bolts to throw ;
And deal damnation round the land
On each I judge Thy foe.

If I am right, Thy grace impart
Still in the right to stay ;
If I am wrong, O teach my heart
To find that better way.

Save me alike from foolish pride
Or impious discontent,
At aught Thy wisdom has denied.
Or aught Thy goodness lent.

Teach me to feel another's wo,
To hide the fault I see ;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.

Mean though I am,— not wholly so,
Since quickened by Thy breath,—
O ! lead me, whereso'er I go,
Through this day's life or death.

This day be bread and peace my lot ;
All else beneath the Sun
Thou know'st if best bestowed or not ;
And let Thy will be done !

To Thee whose temple is all space,
Whose altar earth, sea, skies !
One chorus let all Being raise,
All nature's incense rise !

Mrs. Hemans.

1794-1835.

A DIRGE.

CALM on the bosom of thy God,
Young spirit ! rest thee now ;
Even while with us thy footstep trod
His seal was on thy brow.

Dust, to its narrow house beneath !
Soul to its place on high ! —
They that have seen thy look in death,
No more may fear to die.

Lone are the paths, and sad the bowers,
Whence thy meek smile is gone ;
But oh ! — a brighter home than ours,
In heaven is now thine own.

THE LILIES OF THE FIELD.

"Consider the lilies of the field."

FLOWERS ! when the Saviour's calm benignant eye
Fell on your gentle beauty — when from you
That heavenly lesson for all hearts He drew,
Eternal, universal as the sky —
Then, in the bosom of your purity,
A voice He set, as in a temple-shrine,
That life's quick travellers ne'er might pass you by
Unwarned of that sweet oracle divine.
And though too oft its low, celestial sound,
By the harsh notes of work-day care is drowned,
And the loud steps of vain unlistening Haste,
Yet, the great ocean hath no tone of power
Mightier to reach the soul, in thought's hushed hour,
Than yours, ye Lilies ! chosen thus and graced !

THE BIRDS OF THE AIR.

"And behold the birds of the air."

YE too, the free and fearless birds of air,
Were charged that hour, on missionary wing,
The same bright lesson o'er the seas to bear,
Heaven-guided wanderers with the winds of spring !
Sing on, before the storm and after, sing !
— And call us to your echoing woods away

From worldly cares ; and bid our spirits bring
Faith to imbibe deep wisdom from your lay.
So may those blessed vernal strains renew
Childhood, a childhood yet more pure and true
E'en than the first, within the awakened mind ;
While sweetly, joyously, they tell of life,
That knows no doubts, no questionings, no strife,
But hangs upon its God, unconsciously resigned.

ANGEL VISITS.

ARE ye forever to your skies departed ?
Oh ! will ye visit this dim world no more ?
Ye, whose bright wings a solemn splendour darted
Through Eden's fresh and flowering shades of yore ?
Now are the fountains dried on that sweet spot,
And ye — our faded earth beholds you not !

But may ye not, unseen, around us hover,
With gentle promptings and sweet influence yet,
Though the fresh glory of those days be over,
When, 'midst the palm-trees, man your footsteps met ?
Are ye not near when faith and hope rise high,
When love, by strength, o'ermasters agony ?

William Shakspeare.

1564–1616.

THE DEATHLESS SOUL NOT TO BE IMPOVER-
ISHED IN THE BODY'S SERVICE.

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,
Fooled by those rebel powers that thee array,
Why dost thou pine within, and suffer dearth
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay ?
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
Eat up thy charge ? Is this thy body's end ?
Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store !
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross !
Within be fed, without be rich no more !
So shalt thou feed on death, that feeds on men,
And, death once dead, there's no more dying then.

(199)

Edward Young.*

1684-1765.

FROM THE "NIGHT THOUGHTS."

WHY then *their* loss deplore, that are not lost ?
Why wanders wretched thought their tombs around,
In infidel distress ? Are *angels* there ?

* The psychology of Young is at variance with his theology. The former is liberal and noble; leading to inferences directly hostile to the doctrine of any punishment hereafter apart from that which must be self-inflicted by the soul until it conforms itself to the divine laws. Truly and forcibly has Young remarked, in his Preface to *Night the Sixth*, — "The dispute about religion, and the practice of it, seldom go together. The shorter, therefore, the dispute, the better. I think it may be reduced to this single question, *Is man immortal, or is he not?* If he is not, all our disputes are mere amusements, or trials of skill. * * I have been long persuaded that most, if not all, our infidels are supported in their deplorable error by some doubt of their *immortality* at the bottom. And I am satisfied, that men, once thoroughly convinced of their *immortality*, are not far from being Christians."

Slumbers, raked up in dust, ethereal fire ?—
They live ! they greatly live — a life, on earth
Unkindled, unconceived ; and from an eye
Of tenderness let heavenly pity fall
On me, more justly numbered with the dead.
All, all on earth is *shadow*, all beyond
Is *substance* ; the reverse is Folly's creed.
How solid all, where change shall be no more !
This is the bud of being, the dim dawn,
The twilight of our day, the vestibule :
Life's theatre as yet is shut, and Death,
Strong Death alone, can heave the massy bar,
This gross impediment of clay remove,
And make us *embryos* of existence free !

Life makes the soul dependent on the dust,
Death gives her wings to mount above the spheres.
Through chinks, styled organs, dim life peeps at light ;
Death bursts th' involving cloud, and all is day ;
All eye, all ear, the disembodied power.
Death has *feigned* evils, Nature shall not feel ;
Life, ill substantial, Wisdom cannot shun.
Is not the mighty mind,— that son of Heaven —
By tyrant *Life*, dethroned, imprisoned, pained ?
By *Death* enlarged, ennobled, deified ?
Death but entombs the body ; Life the soul !
Death is the crown of life.
Death wounds to cure : we fall, we rise, we reign !
Spring from our fetters, fasten in the skies.

Where blooming Eden withers in our sight
Death gives us more than was in Eden lost !
This king of terrors is the prince of peace.
When shall I die to vanity, pain, death ?
When shall I *die* ? — When shall I live forever ?

O thou great Arbiter of life and death !
Nature's immortal, immaterial Sun !
Whose all-prolific beam late called me forth
From darkness, teeming darkness, where I lay,
The worm's inferior, and, in rank, beneath
The dust I tread on, high to bear my brow,
To drink the spirit of the golden day,
And triumph in existence ; and could know
No motive but my bliss ; and hast ordained
A rise in blessing ! — With the patriarch's joy,
Thy call I follow to the land unknown ;
I trust in Thee, and know in whom I trust ;
Or life, or death is equal ; neither weighs ;
All weight is this : O let me live to Thee !

Angels are men in lighter habit clad.
Nor are our *brothers* thoughtless of their kin ;
Yet absent, but not absent from their love.
Michael has fought our battles ; Raphael sung
Our triumphs ; Gabriel on our errands flown,
Sent by the Sovereign : and are these, O man !
Thy friends, thy warm allies, and thou (shame burn
Thy cheek to cinder !) rival to the brute ?

Religion ! Providence ! an after-state !
Here is firm footing ; *here* is solid rock !
This can support us ; all is sea besides ;
Sinks under us ; bestorms, and then devours !
His hand the good man fastens on the skies,
And bids Earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl.

The soul of man, a native of the skies
High-born and free, her freedom should maintain
Unsold, unmortgaged for earth's little bribes.
Th' illustrious stranger in this foreign land,
Like strangers, jealous of her dignity,
Studiois of home, and ardent to return,
Of earth suspicious, earth's enchanted cup
With cool reserve light touching, should indulge
On immortality her godlike taste,
There take large draughts ; make her chief banquet
there.

Why is a *wish* far dearer than a *crown* ?
That wish accomplished, why, the grave of bliss ?
Because, in the great future buried deep,
Beyond our plans of empire and renown,
Lies all that man with ardor should pursue,
And He who made him bent him to the right.—
Man's heart th' Almighty to the future sets,
By secret and inviolable springs ;
And makes his hope his sublunary joy. . . .
Why happiness pursued, though never found ?

Man's thirst of happiness declares *it is*,
(For Nature never gravitates to nought) ;
That thirst unquenched declares it is not here.

'Tis immortality deciphers man,
And opens all the mysteries of his make.
Without it half his *instincts* are a riddle :
Without it all his virtues are a dream.
His very crimes attest his dignity ;
His sateless thirst of pleasure, gold and fame,
Declares him born for blessings infinite :
What less than infinite makes un-absurd
Passions, which all on earth but more inflames ?
— Fierce passions, so mismeasured to *this scene*,
Stretched out, like eagles' wings, beyond our nest,
Far, far beyond the worth of all below,
For Earth too large,— presage a nobler flight,
And evidence our title to the skies !

Nothing is dead ; nay, nothing sleeps ; each soul,
That ever animated human clay,
Now wakes ; is on the wing : and where, O where
Will the swarm settle ? — When the trumpet's call,
As sounding brass, collects us, round Heaven's throne
Conglobed, we bask in everlasting day,
(Paternal splendor !) and adhere forever.
Had not the soul this outlet to the skies,
In this vast vessel of the universe,

How should we gasp, as in an empty void !
How in the pangs of famished hope expire !

Who tells me he denies his soul immortal,
Whate'er his boast, has told me, he's a knave.
His duty 'tis to love himself alone ;
Nor care, though mankind perish, if he smiles.
Who thinks, ere long the *man* shall *wholly* die,
Is dead already ; nought but *brute* survives.

A Deity believed, is joy begun ;
A Deity adored, is joy advanced ;
A Deity beloved, is joy matured.
Each branch of piety delight inspires ;
Faith builds a bridge from this world to the next,
O'er death's dark gulf, and all its horror hides ;
Praise, the sweet exhalation of our joy,
That joy exalts, and makes it sweeter still ;
Prayer ardent opens Heaven, lets down a stream
Of glory on the consecrated hour
Of man, in audience with the Deity.
Who worships the Great God, that instant joins
The first in Heaven, and sets his foot on Hell.

The soul of man was made to walk the skies ;
Delightful outlet of her prison *here* !
There, disengaged from her chains, the ties
Of joys terrestrial, she can rove at large ;

There, freely can respire, dilate, extend,
In full proportion let loose all her powers ;
And, undeluded, grasp at something great.
Nor, as a stranger, does she wander there ;
But, wonderful herself, through wonder strays ;
Contemplating *their* grandeur, finds *her own* ;
Dives deep in their economy divine,
Sits high in judgment on their various laws,
And, like a master, judges not amiss.
Hence, greatly pleased, and justly proud, the soul
Grows conscious of her birth celestial ; breathes
More life, more vigor, in her native air ;
And feels herself at home among the stars !

Leopold Scheffer.

1784.

CAPACITY OF MAN FOR PROGRESS.

“THIS dull, dark strife with unillumined souls,
Ending not with the day, but every morn
Afresh returning for another day—
Such warfare makes at last the noblest mind
Heavy and hopeless. Earnestly I wish
'Twere done, that I might rest and silent be !”
So speak you. But distinguish well the truth.
The conflict is not gloomy. Grieved you see
Around you but a dull distracted house,
The old false world with evil deeds, wrong words,
Heavily pressing on all noble minds.
The conflict is right clear, in daylight waged,
With brightness ever pressing on the gloom !
Nor is your conflict with irrationals

(For all would wiser be, and every one
Has faculties for wiser — better — growing) :
See, then, your only conflict is with men,
And your sole strife is to defend and teach
The unillumined, who, without such care,
Must dwindle. Every unenlightened man
Commends himself to you, even as your child.
How easily for him and for yourself
Life's burdens may be lightened, by your words
Opening the spring of truth in his own breast,
And cleansing out the root of all his errors ;
Destroying, even with a single word,
A coming harvest of injurious weeds !
If, then, the Better never must grow weary,
But always think of better, and fulfil it,
How shall the Wise be weary of his task
To show the right, and for the truth contend ?
How shall the heart of the good man grow weary,
Though hand and tongue are worn out in his work ?
And how can gentleness be ever weary ?
(For all true love is gentle, falling on
Men's souls as gentle rains upon the earth).
How can you e'er grow weary of the truth ?
Weary of gentleness and genuine love ?
Be firm and happy, therefore, in the strife !
And keep love in your heart all life's day long,
Till, like the eternal stars, its beams are spread.

Thomas Parnell.

1679-1717.

THE HERMIT.*

FAR in a wild, unknown to public view,
From youth to age, a reverend hermit grew ;
The moss his bed, the cave his humble cell,
His food the fruits, his drink the crystal well ;
Remote from men, with God he passed his days,
Prayer all his business, all his pleasure praise.

A life so sacred, such serene repose,
Seemed heaven itself, till one suggestion rose —
That vice should triumph, virtue, vice obey ;
This sprung some doubt of Providence's sway ;

* The doctrine of an overruling Providence, so consistent with that of the disciplinary object of life and the beneficent intentions of the Creator towards man, here and hereafter, is happily illustrated in this poem. Indeed, it is impossible to reconcile the notion of a special Providence, here set forth, with the creed, which would make the Almighty consign any human soul to everlasting perdition.

His hopes no more a certain prospect boast,
And all the tenor of his soul is lost.
So when a smooth expanse receives impressed
Calm nature's image on its watery breast,
Down bend the banks, the trees depending grow,
And skies beneath with answering colors glow;
But, if a stone the gentle sea divide,
Swift ruffling circles curl on every side,
And glimmering fragments of a broken sun,
Banks, trees and skies, in thick disorder run.

To clear this doubt, to know the world by sight,
To find if books, or swains, report it right,—
For yet by swains alone the world he knew,
Whose feet came wandering o'er the nightly dew,—
He quits his cell ; the pilgrim staff he bore,
And fixed the scallop in his hat before ;
Then, with the sun a rising journey went,
Sedate to think, and watching each event.

The morn was wasted in the pathless grass,
And long and lonesome was the wild to pass ;
But when the southern sun had warmed the day,
A youth came posting o'er a crossing way.
His raiment decent, his complexion fair,
And soft in graceful ringlets waved his hair.
Then, near approaching, “ Father, hail ! ” he cried ;
And, “ Hail, my son ! ” the reverend sire replied.
Words followed words, from question answer flowed,
And talk, of various kind, deceived the road ;
Till, each with other pleased, and loath to part,
While in their age they differ, join in heart.

Thus stands an aged elm, in ivy bound,
Thus youthful ivy clasps an elm around.

Now sank the sun ; the closing hour of day
Came onward, mantled o'er with sober gray ;
Nature in silence bade the world repose,
When, near the road, a stately palace rose.
There, by the moon, through ranks of trees they pass,
Whose verdure crowned their sloping sides of grass.
It chanced the noble master of the dome
Still made his house the wandering stranger's home ;
Yet still the kindness, from a thirst of praise,
Proved the vain flourish of expensive ease.
The pair arrive ; the liveried servants wait ;
Their lord receives them at the pompous gate ;
The table groans with costly piles of food,
And all is more than hospitably good.
Then led to rest, the day's long toil they drown,
Deep sunk in sleep, and silk, and heaps of down.

At length 'tis morn, and at the dawn of day,
Along the wide canals the zephyrs play ;
Fresh o'er the gay parterres the breezes creep,
And shake the neighboring wood, to banish sleep.
Up rise the guests, obedient to the call,
An early banquet decked the splendid hall ;
Rich, luscious wine a golden goblet graced,
Which the kind master forced the guests to taste.
Then, pleased and thankful, from the porch they go,
And, but the landlord, none had cause for woe ;
His cup was vanished ; for, in secret guise,
The younger guest purloined the glittering prize.

As one who spies a serpent in his way,
Glistening and basking in the summer ray,
Disordered stops to shun the danger near,
Then walks with faintness on, and looks with fear ;
So seemed the sire, when, far upon the road,
The shining spoil his wily partner showed.
He stopped with silence, walked with trembling heart,
And much he wished, but durst not ask, to part ;
Murmuring, he lifts his eyes, and thinks it hard,
That generous actions meet a base reward.

While thus they pass, the sun his glory shrouds,
The changing skies hang out their sable clouds ;
A sound in air presaged approaching rain,
And beasts to covert scud across the plain.
Warned by the signs, the wandering pair retreat,
To seek for shelter at a neighboring seat.
'Twas built with turrets on a rising ground,
And strong, and large, and unimproved around ;
Its owner's temper, timorous and severe,
Unkind and griping, caused a desert there.

As near the miser's heavy door they drew,
Fierce rising gusts with sudden fury blew ;
The nimble lightning, mixed with showers, began,
And o'er their heads loud rolling thunders ran.
Here long they knock, but knock or call in vain,
Driven by the wind, and battered by the rain.
At length some pity warmed the master's breast, —
'Twas then his threshold first received a guest ; —
Slow creaking turns the door with jealous care,
And half he welcomes in the shivering pair ;

One frugal fagot lights the naked walls,
And nature's fervor through their limbs recalls ;
Bread of the coarsest sort, with eager wine,
Each hardly granted, served them both to dine ;
And when the tempest first appeared to cease,
A ready warning bade them part in peace.

With still remark, the pondering hermit viewed,
In one so rich, a life so poor and rude.

" And why should such, within himself," he cried,
" Lock the lost wealth a thousand want beside ? "
But what new marks of wonder soon take place
In every settling feature of his face,
When from his vest, the young companion bore
That cup, the generous landlord owned before,
And paid profusely, with the precious bowl,
The stinted kindness of this churlish soul !

But now the clouds in airy tumult fly ;
The sun, emerging, opes an azure sky ;
A fresher green the smelling leaves display,
And, glittering as they tremble, cheer the day ;
The weather courts them from the poor retreat,
And the glad master bolts the wary gate.

While hence they walk, the pilgrim's bosom wrought
With all the travail of uncertain thought ;
His partner's acts without their cause appear,
'Twas there a vice, and seemed a madness here ;
Detesting that, and pitying this, he goes,
Lost and confounded with the various shows.

Now night's dim shades again involve the sky,
Again the wanderers want a place to lie ;

Again they search, and find a lodging nigh ;
The soil improved around, the mansion neat,
And neither poorly low, nor idly great :
It seemed to speak its master's turn of mind,
Content, and not for praise, but virtue, kind.

Hither the walkers turn their weary feet,
Then bless the mansion, and the master greet.
Their greeting fair, bestowed with modest guise,
The courteous master hears, and thus replies :

“ Without a vain, without a grudging heart,
To Him who gives us all, I yield a part ;
From Him you come, from Him accept it here,
A frank and sober, more than costly cheer ! ”
He spoke, and bade the welcome table spread ;
They talk of virtue till the time of bed ;
When the grave household round his hall repair,
Warned by a bell, and close the hours with prayer.

At length the world, renewed by calm repose,
Was strong for toil ; the dappled morn arose ;
Before the pilgrims part, the younger crept
Near the closed cradle, where an infant slept,
And writhed its neck ; the landlord's little pride —
O, strange return ! — grew black, and gasped, and
died.

Horror of horrors ! what ! his only son !
How looked our hermit when the fact was done !
Not hell, though hell's black jaws in sunder part,
And breathe blue fire, could more assault his heart.

Confused, and struck with silence at the deed,
He flies, but, trembling, fails to fly with speed.

His steps the youth pursues ; the country lay
Perplexed with roads ; a servant showed the way ;
A river crossed the path ; the passage o'er
Was nice to find ; the servant trod before ;
Long arms of oak an open bridge supplied,
And deep the waves beneath them bending glide.
The youth, who seemed to watch a time to sin,
Approached the careless guide, and thrust him in ;
Plunging he falls, and, rising, lifts his head,
Then flashing turns, and sinks among the dead.

Wild sparkling rage inflames the father's eyes,
He bursts the bonds of fear, and madly cries,
“ Detested wretch ! ” — but scarce his speech began,
When the strange partner seemed no longer man !
His youthful face grew more serenely sweet,
His robe turned white, and flowed upon his feet ;
Fair rounds of radiant points invest his hair,
Celestial odors breathe through purpled air,
And wings, whose colors glittered on the day,
Wide at his back their gradual plumes display ;
The form ethereal bursts upon his sight,
And moves in all the majesty of light.

Though loud at first the pilgrim's passion grew,
Sudden he gazed, and wist not what to do ;
Surprise, in secret chains, his words suspends,
And in a calm his settling temper ends.
But silence here the beauteous angel broke, —
The voice of music ravished as he spoke : —
“ Thy prayer, thy praise, thy life to vice unknown,
In sweet memorial rise before the throne ;

These charms success in our bright region find,
And force an angel down to calm thy mind.
For this commissioned, I forsook the sky ; —
Nay, cease to kneel, thy fellow-servant I.

“ Then know the truth of government divine,
And let these scruples be no longer thine.

“ The Maker justly claims that world he made ;
In this the right of Providence is laid ;
Its sacred majesty, through all, depends
On using second means to work His ends.
‘Tis thus, withdrawn in state from human eye,
The Power exerts His attributes on high ;
Your actions uses, not controls your will,
And bids the doubting sons of men be still.

“ What strange events can strike with more surprise,
Than those which lately struck thy wondering eyes !
Yet, taught by these, confess the Almighty just,
And, where you can’t unriddle, learn to trust !

“ The great vain man, who fared on costly food,
Whose life was too luxurious to be good,
Who made his ivory stands with goblets shine,
And forced his guests to morning draughts of wine,
Has, with the cup, the graceless custom lost,
And still he welcomes, but with less of cost.

“ The mean, suspicious wretch, whose bolted door
Ne’er moved in pity to the wandering poor,
With him I left the cup, to teach his mind
That Heaven can bless, if mortals will be kind ;
Conscious of wanting worth, he views the bowl,
And feels compassion touch his grateful soul.

Thus artists melt the sullen ore of lead,
With heaping coals of fire upon its head ;
In the kind warmth the metal learns to glow,
And, loose from dross, the silver runs below.

“ Long had our pious friend in virtue trod,
But now the child half weaned his heart from God ;
Child of his age, for him he lived in pain,
And measured back his steps to earth again.
To what excesses had his dotage run !
But God, to save the father, took the son.
To all but thee, in fits he seemed to go,
And 'twas my ministry to deal the blow ;
The poor, fond parent, humbled in the dust,
Now owns, in tears, the punishment was just.

“ But how had all his fortunes felt a wrack,
Had that false servant sped in safety back !
This night his treasured heaps he meant to steal,
And what a fund of charity would fail !
“ Thus Heaven instructs thy mind ; this trial o'er,
Depart in peace, resign, and sin no more.”

On sounding pinions, here the youth withdrew,
The sage stood wondering, as the seraph flew ;
Thus looked Elisha, when, to mount on high,
His master took the chariot of the sky ;
The fiery pomp ascending left to view ;
The prophet gazed, and wished to follow too.

The bending hermit here a prayer begun,
“ Lord, as in heaven, on earth, Thy will be done,”
Then gladly turning, sought his ancient place,
And passed a life of piety and peace.

James Beattie.

1735-1803.

EDWIN'S MEDITATIONS IN AUTUMN.

“ O ye wild groves, O where is now your bloom ! ”
(The Muse interprets thus his tender thought)
“ Your flowers, your verdure, and your balmy gloom,
Of late so grateful in the hour of drought !
Why do the birds, that song and rapture brought
To all your bowers, their mansions now forsake ?
Ah ! why has fickle chance this ruin wrought ?
For now the storm howls mournful through the brake,
And the dead foliage flies in many a shapeless flake.

“ Yet such the destiny of all on earth ;
So flourishes and fades majestic man !
Fair is the bud his vernal morn brings forth,
And fostering gales a while the nursling fan :
O smile, ye heavens, serene ; ye mildews wan,

(218)

Ye blighting whirlwinds, spare his balmy prime,
Nor lessen of his life the little span :
Borne on the swift, though silent, wings of Time,
Old age comes on apace to ravage all the clime.

“ And be it so. Let those deplore their doom,
Whose hope still grovels in this dark sojourn :
But lofty souls, who look beyond the tomb,
Can smile at Fate and wonder how they mourn.
Shall Spring to these sad scenes no more return ?
Is yonder wave the sun’s eternal bed ? —
Soon shall the orient with new lustre burn,
And Spring shall soon her vital influence shed,
Again attune the grove, again adorn the mead.

“ Shall I be left abandoned in the dust,
When Fate, relenting, lets the flower revive,
Shall Nature’s voice, to man alone unjust,
Bid him, though doomed to perish, hope to live ?
Is it for this fair Virtue oft must strive
With disappointment, penury, and pain ? —
No : Heaven’s immortal spring shall yet arrive
And man’s majestic beauty bloom again,
Bright through the eternal year of Love’s triumphant
reign.”

Mrs. Barbauld.

1743-1825.

AN ADDRESS TO THE DEITY.

God of my life ! and Author of my days !
Permit my feeble voice to lisp Thy praise ;
And trembling, take upon a mortal tongue
That hallowed name, to harps of seraphs sung.
Yet here the brightest seraphs could no more
Than veil their faces, tremble, and adore.
Worms, angels, men, in every different sphere,
Are equal all,— for all are nothing here.
All nature faints beneath the mighty name,
Which nature's works through all their parts proclaim
I feel that name my inmost thoughts control,
And breathe an awful stillness through my soul ;
As by a charm, the waves of grief subside ;
Impetuous Passion stops her headlong tide :

At Thy felt presence all emotions cease,
And my hushed spirit finds a sudden peace,
Till every worldly thought within me dies,
And earth's gay pageants vanish from my eyes ;
Till all my sense is lost in infinite,
And one vast object fills my aching sight.

But soon, alas ! this holy calm is broke ;
My soul submits to wear her wonted yoke ;
With shackled pinions strives to soar in vain,
And mingles with the dross of earth again.
But He, our gracious Master, kind as just,
Knowing our frame, remembers man is dust.
His spirit, ever brooding o'er our mind,
Sees the first wish to better hopes inclined ;
Marks the young dawn of every virtuous aim,
And fans the smoking flax into a flame.
His ears are open to the softest cry,
His grace descends to meet the lifted eye ;
He reads the language of a silent tear,
And sighs are incense from a heart sincere.
Such are the vows, the sacrifice I give ;
Accept the vow, and bid the suppliant live :
From each terrestrial bondage set me free ;
Still every wish that centres not in Thee ;
Bid my fond hopes, my vain disquiets cease,
And point my path to everlasting peace.

If the soft hand of winning Pleasure leads
By living waters, and through flowery meads,

When all is smiling, tranquil, and serene,
And vernal beauty paints the flattering scene,
O teach me to elude each latent snare,
And whisper to my sliding heart — Beware !
With caution let me hear the syren's voice,
And doubtful, with a trembling heart, rejoice.
If friendless, in a vale of tears I stray,
Where briars wound, and thorns perplex my way,
Still let my steady soul Thy goodness see,
And with strong confidence lay hold on Thee ;
With equal eye my various lot receive,
Resigned to die, or resolute to live ;
Prepared to kiss the sceptre or the rod,
While God is seen in all, and all in God.

I read His awful name, emblazoned high
With golden letters on th' illumined sky ;
Nor less the mystic characters I see
Wrought in each flower, inscribed in every tree ;
In every leaf that trembles to the breeze
I hear the voice of God among the trees ;
With Thee in shady solitudes I walk,
With Thee in busy crowded cities talk ;
In every creature own Thy forming power,
In each event Thy Providence adore.
Thy hopes shall animate my drooping soul,
Thy precepts guide me, and Thy fears control :
Thus shall I rest, unmoved by all alarms,
Secure within the temple of Thine arms ;

From anxious cares, from gloomy terrors free,
And feel myself omnipotent in Thee.

Then when the last, the closing hour draws nigh,
And earth recedes before my swimming eye ;
When trembling on the doubtful edge of fate
I stand, and stretch my view to either state ;
Teach me to quit this transitory scene
With decent triumph and a look serene ;
Teach me to fix my ardent hopes on high,
And having lived to Thee, in Thee to die.

THE UNKNOWN GOD.

To learnéd Athens, led by fame
As once the man of Tarsus came,—
With pity and surprise,
Midst idol altars as he stood
O'er sculptured marble, brass, and wood,
He rolled his awful eyes.

But one, apart, his notice caught,
That seemed with higher meaning fraught,
Graved on the wounded stone ;
Nor form, nor name was there expressed ;
Deep reverence filled the musing breast,
Perusing “ To the God unknown.”

Age after age has rolled away,
Altars and thrones have felt decay,
Sages and saints have risen ;
And, like a giant roused from sleep,
Man has explored the pathless deep,
And lightnings snatched from heaven.

And many a shrine in dust is laid,
Where kneeling nations homage paid,
By rock, or fount, or grove ;
Ephesian Dian sees no more
Her workmen fuse the silver ore,
Nor Capitolian Jove.

E'en Salem's hallowed courts have ceased
With solemn pomp her tribes to feast ;
No more the victim bleeds ;
The censers, filled with rare perfumes,
And vestments from Egyptian looms,
A purer rite succeeds.

Yet still, where'er presumptuous man
His Maker's essence strives to scan,
And lifts his feeble hands,
Though saint and sage their powers unite,
To fathom that abyss of light,
Ah ! still *that altar* stands.

Thomas Campbell.

1777-1844.

THE HOPE OF AN HEREAFTER.

UNFADING Hope ; when life's last embers burn,
When soul to soul, and dust to dust return,
Heaven to thy charge resigns the awful hour !
Oh ! then, thy kingdom comes ! Immortal Power !
What though each spark of earth-born rapture fly
The quivering lip, pale cheek, and closing eye,
Bright to the soul thy seraph hands convey
The morning dream of life's eternal day —
Then, then, the triumph and the trance begin !
And all the Phœnix spirit burns within !
Oh ! deep enchanting prelude to repose,
The dawn of bliss, the twilight of our woes !
Yet half I hear the parting spirit sigh,
It is a dread and awful thing to die !

Mysterious worlds, untravelled by the sun !
Where Time's far-wand'ring tide has never run,
From your unfathomed shades, and viewless spheres,
A warning comes, unheard by other ears.
'Tis Heaven's commanding trumpet, long and loud,
Like Sinai's thunder, pealing from the cloud !
While Nature hears, with terror-mingled trust,
The shock that hurls her fabric to the dust ;
And, like the trembling Hebrew, when he trod
The roaring waves, and called upon his God,
With mortal terrors clouds immortal bliss,
And shrieks, and hovers o'er the dark abyss !

Daughter of Faith, awake, arise, illume
The dread unknown, the chaos of the tomb !
Melt, and dispel, ye spectre doubts, that roll
Cimmerian darkness on the parting soul !
Fly, like the moon-eyed herald of Dismay,
Chased on his night-steed by the star of day !
The strife is o'er — the pangs of Nature close,
And life's last rapture triumphs o'er her woes.
Hark ! as the spirit eyes, with eagle gaze,
The noon of Heaven undazzled by the blaze,
On Heavenly winds that waft her to the sky,
Float the sweet tones of star-born melody ;
Wild as that hallowed anthem sent to hail
Bethlehem's shepherds in the lonely vale,
When Jordan hushed his waves, and midnight still
Watched on the holy towers of Zion hill !

Soul of the just ! companion of the dead !
Where is thy home, and whither art thou fled ?

Back to its heavenly source thy being goes,
Swift as the comet wheels to whence he rose ;
Doomed on his airy path awhile to burn,
And doomed, like thee, to travel and return.—
Hark ! from the world's exploding centre driven,
With sounds that shook the firmament of Heaven,
Careers the fiery giant, fast and far,
On bick'ring wheels, and adamantine car ;
From planet whirled to planet more remote,
He visits realms beyond the reach of thought ;
But, wheeling homeward, when his course is run,
Curbs the red yoke, and mingles with the sun !
So hath the traveller of earth unfurled
Her trembling wings, emerging from the world ;
And o'er the path by mortal never trod,
Sprung to her source, the bosom of her God !

Oh ! lives there, Heaven ! beneath thy dread ex-
panse,
One hopeless, dark Idolater of Chance,
Content to feed, with pleasures unrefined,
The lukewarm passions of a lowly mind ;
Who, mould'ring earthward, 'reft of every trust,
In joyless union wedded to the dust,
Could all his parting energy dismiss,
And call this barren world sufficient bliss ?—
There live, alas ! of Heaven-directed mien,
Of cultured soul, and sapient eye serene,
Who hailed thee, Man ! the pilgrim of a day,
Spouse of the worm, and brother of the clay !

Frail as the leaf in Autumn's yellow bower,
Dust in the wind, or dew upon the flower !
A friendless slave, a child without a sire,
Whose mortal life, and momentary fire,
Lights to the grave his chance-created form
As ocean-wrecks illuminate the storm ;
And when the gun's tremendous flash is o'er,
To Night and Silence sink for ever more ! —
Are these the pompous tidings ye proclaim,
Lights of the world, and demi-gods of Fame ?
Is this your triumph — this your proud applause,
Children of Truth, and champions of her cause ?
For this hath Science searched, on weary wing,
By shore and sea — each mute and living thing ?
Launched with Iberia's pilot from the steep,
To worlds unknown, and isles beyond the deep ?
Or round the cope her living chariot driven,
And wheeled in triumph through the signs of Heaven ?
Oh ! star-eyed Science, hast thou wandered there,
To waft us home the message of despair ?
Then bind the palm, thy sage's brow to suit,
Of blasted leaf, and death-distilling fruit !
Ah me ! the laurelled wreath that murder rears,
Blood-nursed, and watered by the widow's tears,
Seems not so foul, so tainted, and so dread,
As waves the night-shade round the skeptic head.
What is the bigot's torch, the tyrant's chain ?
I smile on death, if Heav'n-ward Hope remain !
But, if the warring winds of Nature's strife
Be all the faithless charter of my life,

If Chance awaked, inexorable power !
This frail and feverish being of an hour,
Doomed o'er the world's precarious scene to sweep,
Swift as the tempest travels on the deep,
To know Delight but by her parting smile,
And toil, and wish, and weep, a little while ;
Then melt, ye elements, that formed in vain
This troubled pulse, and visionary brain !
Fade, ye wild flowers, memorials of my doom !
And sink, ye stars, that light me to the tomb !
Cease every joy to glimmer on my mind,
But leave — oh ! leave the light of Hope behind !
What though my wingéd hours of bliss have been,
Like angel-visits, few, and far between !
Her musing mood shall every pang appease,
And charm — when pleasures lose the power to
please !

When, 'reft of all, yon widowed sire appears
A lonely hermit in the vale of years ;
Say, can the world one joyous thought bestow
To Friendship, weeping at the couch of Wo ?
No ! but a brighter soothes the last adieu, —
Souls of impassioned mould, she speaks to you !
Weep not, she says, at Nature's transient pain,
Congenial spirits part to meet again ! —

Cold in the dust this perished heart may lie,
But that which warmed it once shall never die !
That spark unburied in its mortal frame,
With living light, eternal, and the same,

Shall beam on Joy's interminable years,
Unveiled by darkness — unassuaged by tears !

Inspiring thought of rapture yet to be,
The tears of love were hopeless, but for thee !
If in that frame no deathless spirit dwell,
If that faint murmur be the last farewell !
If fate unite the faithful but to part,
Why is their memory sacred to the heart ?
Why does the brother of my childhood seem
Restored awhile in every pleasing dream ?
Why do I joy the lonely spot to view,
By artless friendship blessed when life was new ?

Eternal Hope ! when yonder spheres sublime
Pealed their first notes to sound the march of Time,
Thy joyous youth began — but not to fade.—
When all the sister planets have decayed ;
When wrapt in fire the realms of ether glow,
And Heaven's last thunder shakes the world below ;
Thou, undismayed shalt o'er the ruins smile,
And light thy torch at Nature's funeral pile !

Epes Sargent.

MOUNT HOPE.

ODE DELIVERED AT THE CONSECRATION OF THE CEMETERY OF MOUNT HOPE, NEAR BOSTON.

Not in this green retreat

 However beautiful, while Summer launches

 Her odors and soft airs through swaying branches ; —

Though wild flowers court our feet,

 And though the wild birds capture

 The listening sense with their melodious rapture, —

Not here, not here, my friends,

 Let us believe the loved one shall repose,

Or that life's true receptacle descends

 To the dark mould, where sods above it close,

And the immortal with the mortal blends !

 Let not despair or sensual distrust

 Confound this mouldering dust

With the true person — with the inner form,
Which gave the outward all it had of fair ; —
Which is no kindred of the worm,
No warrant for despair !
Not here, my soul, not for one moment here,
Sinks the pure life-spring of one generous tear ;
Of one heaven-aimed affection,
One tender recollection,
One deed of goodness in seclusion wrought,
One lesson, or one thought !
As water rises to its fountain-head,
However low you lay its transient bed,
So must the spirit, from its earthward course,
Mount to the Deity, which is its source !

We give the infant, who to walk is learning,
His leading strings ; — corks to the doubtful swim-
mer ;
So are these bodies, for our brief sojourning,
Helps to us here, while schooled in being's primer.
For here, in God's stupendous seminary,
What various lore the thoughtful eye engages !
Morning and night — the seasons as they vary, —
Spread for our use illuminated pages.
If all were ours unearned, what need of action ?
If God no problem set for our unfolding,
Where were the joy, the power, the benefaction
Of toil, and faith, and prayer, our spirits moulding ?
Where were the innocence, without temptation ?
Where, without freedom, were the self-denial ?

Where were the goal, the triumph, the salvation,
Without the doubt, the danger, and the trial ?
And though to some the fairer lot be given,
Unstained, because untried, to enter Heaven,
O doubt not there is compensation ever
From Him, the just and unforgetting Giver !

If then the Saviour's promise and example
Be an assurance ample,
Let us not say, however fair the breast
 Of the green hill-side, where the graves are made,—
“ Here the beloved ones rest !
 “ Here in this forest shade ! ”
Distant,— and yet how near !—
 Where kindred spirits kindred joys pursue,
In duties ever dear,
 Surprises ever new,
They range from sphere to sphere
Through all the fresh delights of God's eternal year !
Nor are their human ties forgotten quite :
 With the strong will to see friends left behind
 Cometh a might
 Swifter than light,
 And they are here, though viewless as the wind ;
With privilege, at times, to interpose
Between us and our woes.

Since it is gain ineffable, to die
Unto the mortal eye,

What doth it matter to the spirit freed
If the decaying husk feed flower or weed ?
Then for the living be the grounds outlaid,
The eager soil arrayed !
Remote from cities and from habitations,
Here where the grateful trees and underwood
Convert corruption's noxious emanations,
Through Nature's wondrous alchemy, to good.
Not a Necropolis,—
Rather a garden this !
With sylvan alleys and enamelled banks
And pines in plume-tost ranks.
Here let the roses bloom !
Here let the wild bee come
To find the ground
Heaped with such flowery wealth as bee ne'er found !
But O, high-building Vanity ! forbear
To rear upon this spot th' o'ercostly pile !
Rather let living Want thy bounty share,
And trust thou unto watchful Nature's smile
To keep the turf above thy ashes bright,
In Spring's first verdure dight.
Then shall this be a Mount of Hope indeed,
Where not one doubtful title we shall read.

Robert Burns.

1759-1796.

THE INNER LAW.

THE fear o' hell's a hangman's whip,
To haud the wretch in order ;
But where ye feel your honor grip,
Let that aye be your border :
Its slightest touches, instant pause —
Debar all side pretences ;
And resolutely keep its laws,
Uncaring consequences.

The great Creator to revere
Must sure become the creature ;
But still the preaching cant forbear,
And even the rigid feature ;

Yet ne'er with wits profane to range,
Be complaisance extended ;
An Atheist's laugh's a poor exchange
For Deity offended !

When ranting round in pleasure's ring,
Religion may be blinded ;
Or if she gi'e a random sting,
It may be little minded ;
But when on life we're tempest driven,
A conscience but a canker,
A correspondence fixed wi' Heaven
Is sure a noble anchor !

CHARITY.

THEN gently scan your brother man,
Still gentler sister woman ;
Though they may go a trifle wrong,
To step aside is human :
One point must still be greatly dark,
The moving why they do it :
And just as lamely can ye mark
How far perhaps they rue it.

Who made the heart, 'tis He alone
Decidedly can try us ;
He knows each chord — its various tone,
Each spring — its various bias :

Then at the balance let's be mute,
We never can adjust it ;
What's done we partly may compute,
But not know what's resisted.

A PRAYER,

Under the pressure of violent anguish.

O, thou great Being ! what Thou art
Surpasses me to know :
Yet sure I am, that known to Thee
Are all thy works below.

Thy creature here before Thee stands,
All wretched and distrest ;
Yet sure those ills that wring my soul
Obey Thy high behest.

Sure, Thou, Almighty, canst not act
From cruelty or wrath !
O, free my weary eyes from tears,
Or close them fast in death !

But, if I must afflicted be,
To suit some wise design,
Then man my soul with firm resolves
To bear, and not repine !

Lord Byron.

1788-1824.

THE IMMORTAL MIND.

WHEN coldness wraps this suffering clay,
Ah, whither strays the immortal mind ?
It cannot die, it cannot stay,
But leaves its darkened dust behind.
Then, unembodied, doth it trace
By steps each planet's heavenly way ?
Or fill at once the realms of space ;
A thing of eyes, that all survey ?

Eternal, boundless, undecayed,
A thought unseen, but seeing all,
All, all in earth, or skies displayed,
Shall it survey, shall it recall :

Each fainter trace that memory holds
So darkly of departed years,
In one broad glance the soul beholds,
And all, that was, at once appears.

Before creation peopled earth,
Its eye shall roll through chaos back :
And where the furthest heaven had birth,
The spirit trace its rising track.
And where the future mars or makes,
Its glance dilate o'er all to be,
While sun is quenched or system breaks ;
Fixed in its own eternity.

Above or Love, Hope, Hate, or Fear,
It lives all passionless and pure :
An age shall fleet like earthly year ;
Its years as moments shall endure.
Away, away, without a wing,
O'er all, through all, its thoughts shall fly,
A nameless and eternal thing,
Forgetting what it was to die.

R. C. Trench.

COUPLETS.

To halls of heavenly truth admission wouldest thou win ?
Oft Knowledge stands without, while Love may enter in.

God many a spiritual house has reared, but never one
Where lowliness was not laid first, the corner-stone.

Sin, not till it is left, will duly sinful seem ;
A man must waken first, ere he can tell his dream.

When thou art fain to trace a map of thine own heart,
As undiscovered land set down the largest part.

Wouldest thou do harm, and yet unharmed thyself
abide ?

None ever struck another, save through his own side.

God's dealings still are love,— his chastenings are
alone

Love now compelled to take an altered, louder tone.

From our ill-ordered hearts we oft are fain to roam,
As men go forth who find unquietness at home.

Sin may be clasped so close we cannot see its face,
Nor seen nor loathed until held from us a small space.

Set not thy heart on things given only with intent
To be alleviations of thy banishment.

Ill fares the child of heaven, who will not entertain
On earth the stranger's grief, the exile's sense of pain.

Mark how there still has run, enwoven from above,
Through thy life's darkest woof, the golden thread of
love.

Things earthly we must know ere love them : 'tis alone
Things heavenly that must be first loved and after
known.

The sinews of Love's arm use makes more firm and
strong,
Which, being left unused, will disappear ere long.

When will the din of earth grate harshly on our ears ?
When we have once heard plain the music of the
spheres.

Why win we not at once what we in prayer require ?
That we may learn great things as greatly to desire.

The tasks, the joys of earth, the same in heaven will be ;
Only the little brook has widened to a sea.

SPRING.

Who was it that so lately said,
All pulses in thine heart were dead,
Old earth, that now in festal robes
Appearest, as a bride new wed ?
Oh wrapped so late in winding-sheet,
Thy winding-sheet, oh ! where is fled ?
Lo ! 'tis an emerald carpet now,
Where the young monarch, Spring, may tread,
He comes, — and a defeated king,
Old Winter, to the hills is fled.
The warm wind broke his frosty spear,
And loosed the helmet from his head ;
And he weak showers of arrowy sleet
From his strong-holds has vainly sped.

All that was sleeping is awake,
And all is living that was dead.
Who listens now can hear the streams
Leap tinkling from their pebbly bed,

Or see them from their fetters free,
Like silver snakes the meadows thread :
The joy, the life, the hope of earth,
They slept awhile, they were not dead :
Oh, thou, who say'st thy sore heart ne'er
With verdure can again be spread ;
Oh, thou, who mournest them that sleep,
Low lying in an earthly bed ;
Look out on this reviving world,
And be new hopes within thee bred !

SHORTSIGHTEDNESS OF MAN.

A DEW-DROP falling on the ocean-wave,
Exclaimed in fear — “ I perish in this grave ; ”
But, in a shell received, that drop of dew
Unto a pearl of marvellous beauty grew ;
And, happy now, the grace did magnify
Which thrust it forth — as it had feared — to die ;
Until again, “ I perish quite,” it said,
Torn by rude diver from its ocean bed :
O unbelieving ! — So it came to gleam
Chief jewel in a monarch’s diadem.

Francis Quarles.

1592-1644.

TRIAL BEFORE REWARD.

WHAT joyful harvester did e'er obtain
The sweet fruition of his hopeful gain,
Till he in hardy labors first had passed
The summer's heat and stormy winter's blast ?
A sable night returns a shining morrow,
And days of joy ensue sad nights of sorrow ;
The way to bliss lies not on beds of down,
And he that had no cross deserves no crown.
There's but one heaven, one place of perfect ease ;
In man it lies to take it where he please,
Above, or here below : and few men do
Enjoy the one, and taste the other too :
Sweating and constant labor win the goal
Of rest ; afflictions clarify the soul,

And, like hard masters, give more hard directions,
Tutoring the nonage of uncurbed affections.
Wisdom, the antidote of sad despair,
Makes sharp afflictions seem not as they are,
Through patient sufferance ; and doth apprehend,
Not as they seeming are, but as they end.
To bear affliction with a bended brow,
Or stubborn heart, is but to disallow
The speedy means to health ; salve heals no sore,
If misapplied, but makes the grief the more.
Who sends affliction sends an end, and He
Best knows what's best for Him, what's best for me :
'Tis not for me to carve me where I like ;
Him pleases when He list to stroke or strike.
I'll neither wish nor yet avoid temptation,
But still expect it, and make preparation :
If He thinks best my faith shall not be tried,
Lord, keep me spotless from presumptuous pride !
If otherwise, with His trial give me care
By thankful patience to prevent despair.
Fit me to bear whate'er Thou shalt assign ;
I kiss the rod, because the rod is Thine !
Howe'er, let me not boast, nor yet repine ;
With trial, or without, Lord, make me Thine !

Thomas Hood.

1798-1845.

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS.

"Drowned! drowned!"—*Hamlet*.

ONE more Unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements;

Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing,
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully ;
Think of her mournfully ;
Gently and humanly ;
Not of the stains of her,
All that remains of her,
Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
Rash and undutiful ;
Past all dishonor,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family —
Wipe those poor lips of hers,
Oozing so clammily.

Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses ;
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home ?

Who was her father ?
Who was her mother ?
Had she a sister ?
Had she a brother ?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other ?

Alas for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun !
Oh ! it was pitiful !
Near a whole city full,
Home, she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
Feelings had changed ;
Love by harsh evidence ;
Thrown from its eminence ;
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood with amazement
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver.
But not the dark arch
Or the black flowing river;
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
Swift to be hurled —
Any where, any where
Out of the world !

In she plunged boldly,
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran, —
Over the brink of it.
Picture it — think of it,
Dissolute man !
Lave in it, drink of it,
Then, if you can !

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care,
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair !

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
Decently, kindly, —
Smooth and compose them.
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly !

Dreadfully staring
Through muddy impurity,
As when the daring
Last look of despairing
Fixed on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurred by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity ;
Into her rest.—
Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast !

Owning her weakness,
Her evil behavior,
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins to her Saviour !

FAREWELL LIFE.

FAREWELL Life ! My senses swim,
And the world is growing dim :
Thronging shadows crowd the light,
Like the advent of the night ;

Colder, colder, colder still,
Upward starts a vapor chill ;
Strong the earthly odor grows,—
I smell the mould above the rose !

Welcome Life ! The Spirit strives !
Strength returns, and hope revives ;
Cloudy fears and shapes forlorn
Fly like shadows at the morn,—
O'er the earth there comes a bloom ;
Sunny light for sullen gloom,
Warm perfume for vapor cold,—
I smell the rose above the mould !

Sarah Flower Adams.

HOPE.

THE world may change from old to new,
From new to old again;
Yet Hope and Heaven for ever true,
Within man's heart remain.
The dreams that bless the weary soul,
The struggles of the strong,
Are steps towards some happy goal,
The story of Hope's song.

Hope leads the child to plant the flower,
The man to sow the seed ;
Nor leaves fulfilment to her hour,
But prompts again to deed.
And ere upon the old man's dust
The grass is seen to wave,

We look through fallen tears — to trust
Hope's sunshine on the grave.

Oh no ! it is no flattering lure,
No fancy weak or fond,
When Hope would bid us rest secure
In better life beyond.
Nor loss nor shame, nor grief nor sin,
Her promise may gainsay ;
The voice Divine hath spoke within,
And God did ne'er betray.

FAITH IN DIVINE GOODNESS.

He sendeth sun, He sendeth shower,
Alike they're needful to the flower,
And joys and tears alike are sent
To give the soul fit nourishment.
As comes to me or cloud or sun,
Father, Thy will, not mine, be done !

Can loving children e'er reprove
With murmurs whom they trust and love ?
Creator, I would ever be
A trusting, loving child to Thee.
As comes to me or cloud or sun,
Father, Thy will, not mine, be done !

O, ne'er will I at life repine !
Enough that Thou hast made it mine.
When falls the shadow cold of death,
I yet will sing, with parting breath,
As comes to me or cloud or sun,
Father, Thy will, not mine, be done !

NEARER TO THEE.

NEARER, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee !
Ee'n though it be a cross
That raiseth me ;
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to Thee —
Nearer to Thee !

Though like a wanderer —
The sun gone down,
Darkness comes over me,
My rest a stone ;
Yet in my dreams I'd be
Nearer, my God, to Thee —
Nearer to Thee !

There let the way appear
Steps unto heaven ;
All that Thou sendest me
In mercy given ;

Angels to beckon me
Nearer, my God, to Thee —
 Nearer to Thee !

Then with my waking thoughts
 Bright with Thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs
 Bethel I'll raise ;
So by my woes to be
Nearer, my God, to Thee —
 Nearer to Thee !

Or, if on joyful wing,
 Cleaving the sky,
Sun, moon and stars forgot,
 Upwards I fly —
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to Thee —
 Nearer to Thee !

Charles Mackay.

THE CHILD AND THE MOURNERS.

A LITTLE child, beneath a tree
Sat and chanted cheerily
A little song, a pleasant song,
Which was — she sang it all day long —
“ When the wind blows the blossoms fall ;
But a good God reigns over all.”

There passed a lady by the way,
Moaning in the face of day :
There were tears upon her cheek,
Grief in her heart too great to speak ;
Her husband died but yester-morn,
And left her in the world forlorn.

She stopped and listened to the child
That looked to heaven, and singing, smiled ;

And saw not for her own despair,
Another lady, young and fair,
Who also passing, stopped to hear
The infant's anthem ringing clear.

For she but few sad days before
Had lost the little babe she bore ;
And grief was heavy at her soul
As that sweet memory o'er her stole,
And showed how bright had been the Past,
The Present drear and overcast.

And as they stood beneath the tree
Listening, soothed and placidly,
A youth came by, whose sunken eyes
Spake of a load of miseries ;
And he, arrested like the twain,
Stopped to listen to the strain.

Death had bowed the youthful head
Of his bride beloved, his bride unwed :
Her marriage robes were fitted on,
Her fair young face with blushes shone,
When the destroyer smote her low,
And changed the lover's bliss to woe.

And these three listened to the song,
Silver-toned, and sweet, and strong,
Which that child, the livelong day,
Chanted to itself in play :

“ When the wind blows the blossoms fall,
But a good God reigns over all.”

The widow’s lips impulsive moved ;
The mother’s grief, tho’ unreproved,
Softened, as her trembling tongue
Repeated what the infant sung ;
And the sad lover, with a start,
Conned it over to his heart.

And though the child — if child it were,
And not a seraph sitting there —
Was seen no more, the sorrowing three
Went on their way resignedly,
The song still ringing in their ears —
Was it music of the spheres ?

Who shall tell ? They did not know.
But in the midst of deepest woe
The strain recurred when sorrow grew,
To warn them, and console them too :
“ When the wind blows the blossoms fall,
But a good God reigns over all.”

THE LITTLE MOLES.

WHEN canting hypocrites combine
To curb a free man’s thought,
And hold all doctrine undivine
That holds their canting naught ;

When round their narrow pale they plod,
And scornfully assume
That all without are cursed of God,
And justify the doom :—
We think of God's eternal love
And strong in hope reply,
Grub, little moles, grub under ground,
There's sunshine in the sky.

When smug philosophers survey
The various climes of earth,
And mourn, poor sagelings of a day !
Its too prolific birth ;
And prove by figure, rule, and plan,
The large fair world too small
To feed the multitudes of man
That flourish on its ball :
We view the vineyards on the hills,
Or corn-fields waving high ;—
Grub, little moles, grub under ground,
There's sunshine in the sky.

When men complain of human kind
In misanthropic mood,
And thinking evil things, grow blind
To presence of the good ;
When, walled in prejudices strong,
They urge that evermore
The world is fated to go wrong
For going wrong before :

We feel the truths they cannot feel,
And smile as we reply,
Grub, little moles, grub under ground,
There's sunshine in the sky.

OLD OPINIONS.

ONCE we thought that Power Eternal
Had decreed the woes of man ;
That the human heart was wicked
Since its pulses first began ;
That the earth was but a prison,
Dark and joyless at the best,
And that men were born for evil,
And imbibed it from the breast ;
That 'twas vain to think of urging
Any earthly progress on.
Old opinions ! rags and tatters !
Get you gone ! get you gone !

Once we thought that Kings were holy
Doing wrong by right divine ;
That the Church was Lord of Conscience,
Despot over *Mine* and *Thine* :
That whatever priests commanded,
No one could reject and live ;
And that all who differed from them
It was error to forgive,—

Right to send to stake or halter
With eternal malison.

Old opinions! rags and tatters!
Get you gone! get you gone!

Once we thought that holy Freedom
Was a cursed and tainted thing ;
Foe of Peace and Law and Virtue ;
Foe of Magistrate and King ;
That all vile degraded passion
Ever followed in her path ;
Lust and Plunder, War and Rapine,
Tears, and Anarchy, and Wrath ;
That the angel was a cruel,
Haughty, blood-stained Amazon.
Old opinions! rags and tatters!
Get you gone! get you gone!

Once we thought that Education
Was a luxury for the few ;
That to give it to the many
Was to give it scope undue ;
That 'twas foolish to imagine
It could be as free as air,
Common as the glorious sunshine
To the child of want and care ;
That the poor man, educated,
Quarreled with his toil anon.
Old opinions! rags and tatters!
Get you gone! get you gone!

Old opinions, rags and tatters ;
Ye are worn ; — ah, quite threadbare !
We must cast you off for ever ; —
 We are wiser than we were :
Never fitting, always cramping,
 Letting in the wind and sleet,
Chilling us with rheums and agues,
 Or inflaming us with heat.
We have found a mental raiment
 Purer, whiter to put on.
Old opinions ! rags and tatters !
Get you gone ! get you gone !

“ WE ARE WISER THAN WE KNOW.”

THOU, who in the midnight silence
Lookest to the orbs on high,
Feeling humbled, yet elated,
In the presence of the sky ;
Thou, who minglest with thy sadness
Pride ecstatic, awe divine,
That ev'n *thou* canst trace their progress
And the law by which they shine —
Intuition shall uphold thee,
Even though reason drag thee low ;
Lean on faith, look up rejoicing,
We are wiser than we know.

Thou, who hearest plaintive music,
Or sweet songs of other days ;
Heaven-revealing organs pealing,
Or clear voices hymning praise,
And wouldest weep, thou know'st not wherefore,
Though thy soul is steeped in joy ;
And the world looks kindly on thee,
And thy bliss hath no alloy —
Weep, nor seek for consolation,
Let the heaven-sent droplets flow,
They are hints of mighty secrets,
We are wiser than we know.

Thou, who in the noon-time brightness
Seest a shadow undefined ;
Hear'st a voice that indistinctly
Whispers caution to thy mind :
Thou, who hast a vague foreboding
That a peril may be near,
Even when Nature smiles around thee,
And thy Conscience holds thee clear —
Trust the warning — look before thee —
Angels may the mirror show,
Dimly still, but sent to guide thee,
We are wiser than we know.

Countless chords of heavenly music,
Struck ere earthly time began,
Vibrate in immortal concord
To the answering soul of man :

Countless rays of heavenly glory
Shine through spirit pent in clay,
On the wise men at their labors,
On the children at their play.
Man has gazed on heavenly secrets,
Sunned himself in heavenly glow,
Seen the glory, heard the music,
We are wiser than we know.

Mary Howitt.

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

LISTEN, all ye Christian people,
Let no fears your souls dismay ;
God's own Son, the Lord, the Saviour,
He was born on Christmas day.
All the earth was bound in sadness,
Darkness lay upon the land,
And the silence of the midnight,
When the moment was at hand ;
When through all the midnight darkness,
Through the world's sad heart forlorn,
Passed a thrill of life ecstatic ; —
And the Christ ! the Christ was born !

Nature owned the glad emotion ;
And the simple shepherd folk,

As if day shone out above them,
With the joyful impulse woke ;
Woke, and lo ! a glorious vision
Filled their souls with wondering awe,
And ten thousand holy angels,
Thronging all the heavens, they saw.
And they heard them sing, as never
Skylark sang above the corn, —
“ Peace on earth, and endless blessing !
For the Christ ! the Christ is born !

“ Sons and daughters of affliction,
Join great Nature’s choral voice !
Thou, the captive ; thou, the stranger ;
Thou, the poor, rejoice ! rejoice !
Weeping mother, cease thy anguish,
For thy first-born gone astray ;
Christ is born, the dear Redeemer,
Who will save the castaway !
Little toiling orphan children,
Heirs of destiny forlorn,
Weep not, for the true Consoler —
Christ, the mourner’s Friend — is born !

“ Sinner, conscious of transgression,
Scorned of men, outcast and vile,
Christ is born, whose blood shall cleanse thee,
And to God shall reconcile !
Noble spirit, patriot, poet,
Thirsting to be great and free,

Christ is born, thy true ensample,
Dying on the Cross for thee ! ”
Thus they sang, those holy angels,
’Mid the pallid stars of morn,
“ Peace on earth, and endless blessing !
For the Christ ! the Christ is born ! ”

MAN'S JUDGMENT.

NAME her not, the guilty one,
Virtue turns aside for shame
At the mention of her name :
Very evilly hath she done.
Pity is on her misspent :
She was born of guilty kin,
Her life's course hath guilty been ;
Never unto school she went,
And whate'er she learned was sin ;
Let her die !

She was nurtured for her fate ;
Beautiful she was, and vain ;
Like a child of sinful Cain,
She was born a reprobate.
Lives like hers the world defile ;
Plead not for her, let her die,
As the child of infamy,

Ignorant and poor and vile,
Plague-spot in the public eye ;
Let her die !

THE HEART OF THE OUTCAST.

I AM young, alas ! so young !
And the world has been my foe ;
And by hardship, wrong, and woe,
Hath my bleeding heart been stung.
There was none, O God, to teach me
What was wrong and what was right.
I have sinned before Thy sight ;
Let my cry of anguish reach Thee,
Piercing through the glooms of night,
God of love !

Man is cruel, and doth smother
Tender mercy in his breast ;
Lays fresh burdens on the oppressed ,
Pities not an erring brother,
Pities not the stormy throes
Of the soul despair hath riven,
Nor the brain to madness driven.
No one but the sinner knows
What it means to be forgiven,
God of love !

Therefore will I put my trust
In thy mercy : and I cleave

To that love which can forgive ;
To that judgment which is just ;
Which can pity all my weakness ;
Which hath seen the life-long strife
Of passions fiercer than the knife ;
Known the desolating bleakness
Of my desert path through life,
 God of love !

I must perish in my youth ;
And had I been better taught,
And did Virtue as it ought,
And had grey-haired Wisdom ruth,
I should not have fallen so low.
'Tis the power of circumstance,
'Tis the wretch's dire mischance,
To be born to sin and woe.
Pity Thou my ignorance,
 God of love !

REJOICING IN HEAVEN.

YOUNG spirit, freed from bondage,
Rejoice ! Thy work is done ;
The weary world is 'neath thy feet ;
Thou, brighter than the sun !

Arise, put on the garments
Which the redeeméd win.
Now, sorrow hath no part in thee,
Thou, sanctified from sin !

Awake, and breathe the living air
Of our celestial clime !
Awake to love which knows no change,
Thou, who hast done with time !

Awake ! Lift up thy joyful eyes,
See, all heaven's host appears ;
And be thou glad exceedingly,
Thou, who hast done with tears.

Awake ! descend ! Thou art not now
With those of mortal birth ;
The living God hath touched thy lips,
Thou, who hast done with earth !

THE GRAVE'S VICTOR.

YES, than earth's mightiest mightier,
O Grave, thou hast thy vanquisher !
Long in thy night was man forlorn,
Long didst thou laugh his hope to scorn :—
Vainly Philosophy might dream :—
Her light was but the meteor gleam,

Till rose the Conqueror of Death,—
The humble Man of Nazareth :
He stood between us and despair ;
He bore, and gave us strength to bear ;
The mysteries of the grave unsealed,
Our glorious destiny revealed ;
Nor sage nor bard may comprehend
The heaven of rest to which we tend.
Our home is not this mortal clime ;
Our life hath not its bounds in time ;
And death is but the cloud that lies
Between our souls and paradise.

O Grave ! well might each thoughtful race
Give thee the high and holy place :
Mountains and groves were meet for thee,
Thou portal of eternity !

Philip James Bailey.

SONG OF THE SAINTS.

FROM "FESTUS."

CALL all who love Thee, Lord ! to Thee ;
Thou knowest how they long
To leave these broken lays, and aid
In Heaven's unceasing song ;
How they long, Lord ! to go to Thee,
And hail Thee with their eyes, —
Thee in Thy blessedness, and all
The nations of the skies.

All who have loved Thee and done well,
Of every age, creed, clime,
The host of saved ones from the ends
And all the worlds of time :

The wise in matter and in mind,
The soldier, sage, and priest,
King, prophet, hero, saint, and bard,
The greatest soul and least.

The old and young and very babe,
The maiden and the youth,
All re-born angels of one age —
The age of Heaven and truth ;
The rich, the poor, the good, the bad,
Redeemed alike from sin ;
Lord ! close the book of time, and let
Eternity begin.

THIS LIFE'S ULTIMATE KNOWLEDGE.

AND as the vesper hymn of Time precedes
The starry matins of Eternity
And daybreak of existence in the Heavens, —
To know this, is to know we shall depart
Into the storm-surrounding calm on high,
The sacred cirque, the all-central infinite
Of that self-blessedness wherein abides
Our God, all kind, all loving, all beloved ; —
To feel life one great ritual, and its laws
Writ in the vital rubric of the blood,
Flow *in* obedience and flow *out* command,

In sealike circulation ; and be here
Accepted as a gift by Him, who gives,
An empire as an alms, nor counts it aught,
So long as all his creatures joy in Him,
The great Rejoicer of the Universe,
Whom all the boundless spheres of Being bless.

THE MAIDEN'S PRAYER.

FROM "THE ANGEL WORLD."

My Lord, my God !
Thine is the Spirit which commands and smiles ;
The soul which serves and suffers ; — Thine the stars
Tabled upon Thy bosom like the stones
Oracular of light, on the priest's breast ;
Thine the minutest mote the moonbeams shew !
Let but Thy words come true, and all are blest ;
Be but Thine infinite intents fulfilled, —
And what shall foil the covenanted oath
Whereon the mounded earth is based ? — and lo !
The whole at last redeemed and glorified.

John Greenleaf Whittier.

TAULER.

TAULER, the preacher, walked, one autumn day,
Without the walls of Strasburg, by the Rhine,
Pondering the solemn miracle of life,
As one who, wandering in the starless night,
Feels, momently, the jar of unseen waves,
And hears the thunder of an unknown sea,
Breaking along an unimagined shore.

And as he walked he prayed — even the same
Old prayer with which, for half a score of years,
Morning, and noon, and evening, lip and heart
Had groaned : “ Have pity upon me, O Lord !
Thou seest, while teaching others, I am blind :
Send me a man that can direct my steps ! ”

Then, as he mused, he heard along his path
A sound as of an old man's staff among
The dry, dead linden leaves, and looking up
He saw a stranger, weak, and poor, and old.

"Peace unto thee, father!" Tauler said :
"God gives thee a good day!" The old man raised
Slowly his calm blue eyes. "I thank thee, son ;
But *all* my days are good, and none are ill."

Wondering thereat, the preacher spake again :
"God give thee a happy life." The old man smiled :
"I never am unhappy."

Tauler laid
His hand upon the stranger's coarse gray sleeve :
"Tell me, O father, what thy strange words mean.
Surely man's days are evil, and his life
Sad as the grave it leads to." "Nay, my son,
Our times are in God's hands, and all our days
Are as our needs : for shadow as for sun,
For cold as heat, for want as wealth, alike
Our thanks are due, since that is best which is,
And that which is not, sharing not His life,
Is evil only as devoid of good.
And for the happiness of which I spake,
I find it in submission to His will,
And calm trust in the holy Trinity,
Its knowledge, goodness, and almighty power."

Silently wondering for a little space
Stood the great preacher ; then he spake as one
Who, suddenly grappling with a haunting thought,
Which long has followed, whispering through the dark
Strange terrors, drags it, shrieking, into light :
“ What if God’s will consign thee hence to hell ? ”

“ Then,” said the stranger, cheerily, “ be it so.
What hell may be I know not ; this I know —
I cannot lose the presence of the Lord.
One arm, Humility, takes hold upon
His dear Humanity ; the other, Love,
Clasps his Divinity. So, where I go
He goes ; and better fire-walled hell with Him
Than golden-gated paradise without.”

Tears sprang in Tauler’s eyes. A sudden light,
Like the first ray that fell on chaos, clove
Apart the shadow wherein he had walked
Darkly at noon. And, as the strange old man
Went his slow way until his silver hair
Set like the white moon, where the hills of vines
Slope to the Rhine, he bowed his head and said :
“ My prayer is answered. God hath sent the man
Long sought, to teach me, by his simple trust,
Wisdom the weary schoolmen never knew.”

So, entering with a changed and cheerful step
The city gates, he saw, far down the street,
A mighty shadow break the light of noon,

Which tracing backward till its airy lines
Hardened to stony plinths, he raised his eyes
O'er broad façade and lofty pediment,
O'er architrave and frieze and sainted niche,
Up the stone lace-work, chiseled by the wise
Erwin of Steinbach, dizzily up to where
In the noon brightness the great minster's tower,
Jewelled with sunbeams on its mural crown,
Rose like a visible prayer. "Behold!" he said,
"The stranger's faith made plain before mine eyes!
As yonder tower outstretches to the earth
The dark triangle of its shade alone
When the clear day is shining on its top,
So darkness in the pathway of man's life
Is but the shadow of God's providence,
By the great sun of wisdom cast thereon;
And what is dark below is light in heaven!"

THE ANGEL OF PATIENCE.

A FREE PARAPHRASE OF THE GERMAN.

To weary hearts, to mourning homes,
God's meekest Angel gently comes;
No power has he to banish pain,
Or give us back our lost again,
And yet, in tenderest love, our dear
And Heavenly Father sends him here.

There's quiet in that Angel's glance,
There's rest in his still countenance ;
He mocks no grief with idle cheer,
Nor wounds with words the mourner's ear ;
But ills and woes he may not cure,
He kindly learns us to endure.

Angel of Patience ! sent to calm
Our feverish brow with cooling balm ;
To lay the storms of hope and fear,
And reconcile life's smile and tear ;
And throbs of wounded pride to still,
And make our own our Father's will !

Oh ! thou, who mournest on thy way,
With longings for the close of day,
He walks with thee, that Angel kind,
And gently whispers,—“ Be resigned !
Bear up, bear on, the end shall tell
The dear Lord ordereth all things well !”

Robert Nicoll.

1814-1837.

LINES WRITTEN IN PROSPECT OF DEATH.*

THE dew is on the summer's greenest grass,
Through which the modest daisy blushing peeps ;
The gentle wind that like a ghost doth pass,
A waving shadow on the corn-field keeps ;
But I who love them all shall never be
Again among the woods, or on the moorland lea !

The sun shines sweetly — sweeter may it shine ! —
Blessed is the brightness of a summer day ;
It cheers lone hearts ; and why should I repine,
Although among green fields I cannot stray !
Woods ! I have grown, since last I heard you wave,
Familiar now with death, and neighbor to the grave !

* It is believed that this was the last, or among the very last, of Nicoll's compositions.

These woods have shaken mighty human souls —
Like a sepulchral echo drear they sound —
E'en as the owl's wild whoop at midnight rolls
The ivied remnants of old ruins round.
Yet wherefore tremble ? Can the soul decay ? —
Or that which thinks and feels, in aught e'er fade
away ?

Are there not aspirations in each heart,
After a better, brighter world than this ?
Longings for beings nobler in each part —
Things more exalted — steeped in deeper bliss ?
Who gave us these ? What are they ? Soul ! in thee
The bud is budding now for immortality !

Death comes to take me where I long to be ;
One pang, and then bright blooms th' immortal
flower ;
Death comes to lead me from mortality
To lands which know not one unhappy hour :
I have a hope — a faith ; — from sorrow here
I'm led by death away — why should I start and fear ?

If I have loved the forest and the field,
Can I not love them deeper, better, there ?
If all that power hath made, to *me* doth yield
Something of good and beauty — something fair —
Freed from the grossness of mortality,
May I not love them all, and better all enjoy ?

A change from woe to joy — from earth to heaven —
Death gives me this ; — it leads me calmly where
The souls that long ago from mine were riven
May meet again ! Death answers many a prayer.
Bright day ! shine on — be glad : — days brighter far
Are stretched before my eyes than those of mortals are.

I would be laid among the wildest flowers,
I would be laid where happy hearts can come : —
The worthless clay I heed not ; but in hours
Of gushing noon-tide joy, it may be, some
Will dwell upon my name ; and I will be
A happy spirit there, affection's look to see.

Death is upon me, yet I fear not now : —
Open my chamber-window — let me look
Upon the silent vales — the sunny glow
That fills each alley, close, and copsewood nook :
I know them — love them — mourn not them to leave ;
Existence and its change my spirit cannot grieve !

Miscellaneous.

SONGS OF BEING.

THE BIRTH.

HAIL ! new-waked atom of the Eternal whole,
Young voyager upon Time's mighty river !
Hail to thee, Human Soul !
 Hail, and forever !
Pilgrim of life, all hail !
He who at first called forth
 From nothingness the earth,
Who clothed the hills in strength, and dug the sea,
 Who gave the stars to gem
 Night like a diadem,
 Thou little child, made thee ;
Young habitant of earth,
Fair as its flowers, though brought in sorrow forth,
 Thou art akin to God who fashioned thee !

The heavens themselves shall vanish as a scroll,
The solid earth dissolve, the stars grow pale,
But thou, O Human Soul,
Shalt be immortal ! Hail !
Thou young Immortal, Hail !
He, before whom are dim
Seraph and cherubim,
Who gave the archangels strength and majesty,
Who sits upon heaven's throne,
The everlasting One,
Thou little child, made thee !
Fair habitant of earth,
Immortal in thy God, though mortal by thy birth,
Born for life's trials, hail ! all hail to thee !

THE DEATH.

Shrink not, O Human Spirit !
The Everlasting Arm is strong to save !
Look up, look up, frail nature ! put thy trust
In Him who went down mourning to the dust,
And overcame the grave !
Quickly goes down the sun ;
Life's work is almost done ;
Fruitless endeavor, hope deferred, and strife !
One little struggle more,
One pang, and then is o'er
All the long, mournful weariness of life.
Kind friends, 'tis almost past ;
Come now, and look your last !

Sweet children, gather near,
And his last blessing hear.
See how he loved you who departeth now !
And, with thy trembling step and pallid brow,
O, most belovéd one,
Whose breast he leaned upon,
Come, faithful unto death,
Receive his parting breath !
The fluttering spirit panteth to be free,—
Hold him not back who speeds to victory !
— The bonds are riven, the struggling soul is free !
Hail, hail, enfranchised spirit !
Thou that the wine-press of the field hath trod !
On, blessed Immortal, on through boundless space,
And stand with thy Redeemer, face to face,
And stand before thy God !
Life's weary work is o'er,
Thou art of earth no more :
No more art trammelled by the oppressive clay,
But tread'st with wingéd ease
The high acclivities
Of truths sublime, up heaven's crystalline way.
Here is no bootless quest ;
The city's name is Rest ;
Here shall no fear appall ;
Here love is all in all ;
Here shalt thou win thy ardent soul's desire ;
Here clothe thee in thy beautiful attire.
Lift, lift thy wondering eyes !
Yonder is Paradise,

And this fair shining band
Are spirits of thy land !

And these that throng to meet thee are thy kin,
Who have awaited thee, redeemed from sin !
The city gates unfold — enter, O, enter in !

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

WHERE are the mighty ones of ages past,
Who o'er the world their inspiration cast,—
Whose memories stir our spirits like a blast ?—
Where are the dead ?

Where are the lofty minds of Greece ? Where be
The men of Sparta and Thermopylae ?
The conquering Macedonian, where is he ?—
Where are the dead ?

Where are Rome's founders ? Where her chiefest son,
Before whose name the whole known world bowed
down,—
Whose conquering arm chased the retreating sun ?—
Where are the dead ?

Where's the bard-warrior king of Albion's state,
A pattern for earth's sons to emulate,—
The truly, nobly, wisely, goodly great ?—
Where are the dead ?

Where is Gaul's hero, who aspired to be
A second Cæsar in his mastery,—
To whom earth's crowned ones trembling bent the
knee? —

Where are the dead?

Where is Columbia's son, her darling child,
Upon whose birth Virtue and Freedom smiled,—
The Western Star, bright, pure, and undefiled? —

Where are the dead?

Where are the sons of song, the soul-inspired,—
The bard of Greece, whose muse (of Heaven acquired)
With admiration ages past has fired, —

The classic dead?

Greater than all, — an earthly Sun enshrined,—
Where is the King of bards? Where shall we find
The Swan of Avon, — monarch of the mind, —

The mighty dead?

With their frail bodies, did they wholly die,
Like the brute dead passing for ever by?
Then wherefore was their intellect so high, —

The mighty dead?

Why was it not confined to earthly sphere, —
To earthly wants? If it must perish here,
Why did they languish for a bliss more dear, —

The blessed dead?

If here they perished, in their being's germ,—
Here thought and aspiration had their term,—
Why should a giant's strength propel a worm?—
The dead — the dead, —

There are no dead! The forms, indeed, did die,
That cased the ethereal beings now on high:
'Tis but the outward covering is thrown by:—
This is the dead!

The spirits of the lost, of whom we sing,
Have perished not; they have but taken wing,—
Changing an earthly for a Heavenly spring:
There are the dead!



A DREAM OF HEAVEN.

Lo, the seal of death is breaking,
Those who slept its sleep are waking,
Eden opes her portals fair!
Hark, the harps of God are ringing,
Hark, the seraph's hymn is singing,
And the living rills are flinging
Music on immortal air!

There no more at eve declining,
Suns without a cloud are shining

O'er the land of life and love ;
Heaven's own harvests woo the reaper,
Heaven's own dreams entrance the sleeper,
Not a tear is left the weeper
To profane one flower above.

No frail lilies there are breathing,
There no thorny rose is wreathing
In the bowers of paradise ;
Where the founts of life are flowing,
Flowers unknown to time are blowing,
Mid far richer verdure glowing
Than is sunned by mortal skies.

There no sigh of memory swelleth,
There no tear of misery dwelleth,
Hearts will bleed or break no more ;
Past is all the cold world's scorning,
Gone the night and broke the morning,
With seraphic day adorning
Life's glad waves and golden shore.

Oh, on that bright shore to wander,
Trace those radiant waves meander,
All we loved and lost to see, —
Is this hope so pure, so splendid,
Vainly with our being blended ?
No ! with time ye are not ended,
Visions of eternity !

THOUGHTS FOR THE DEPARTED.

THINK ever of the dead :—

When Spring is beautiful, when Summer shines,
When the soft skies rose-mingled lustre shed,
When autumn sunbeams kiss the purple vines,
And when the snow-stars glisten — to them wing
Thy gentlest thought ; they filled thy life with spring.

They think of thee — the dead :—

The glorious dwellers in yon peopled skies !
Their thoughts, like dew-drops, on thy heart are shed :
They fill thy soul with blessed sanctities, —
Sweet inspirations of the pure and fair, —
The spring-time breathings of celestial air !

They dwell with thee — the dead :—

Pavilioned in the auroral tents of light ;
Their spheres of heavenly influence round thee spread,
Their pure transparency veiling them from sight.
Angelic ministers of love and peace,
Whose sweet solicitudes will never cease.

They strive with thee — the dead :—

Spirit with spirit striving, heart with heart,
Alluring from the paths of Wrong you tread,
Spurned and resisted they may not depart,
In the dark prison of Life's last despair,
Lo ! the delivering Angel's with thee there !

They watch with thee — the dead :—
Through the last agony, the doubt, the gloom,
When Soul and Body are through pain unwed,
And Night droops down — the midnight of the
tomb :—
And o'er the soul sense steals their wakening hymn,
Familiar — yet the song of Seraphim.

They welcome thee — the dead :—
The soft, sweet glow of those belovéd eyes
Balms each worn heart that long hath inly bled,
And gives new glory to God's paradise !
Love and remember them — unseen, yet near, —
Their white feet guide thee to the immortal sphere !

THE HAPPIER SPHERE.

If yon bright stars which gem the night,
Be each a blissful dwelling sphere,
Where kindred spirits re-unite,
Whom death has torn asunder here,
How sweet it were at once to die,
And leave this blighted orb afar —
Mix soul with soul, to cleave the sky,
And soar away from star to star.

But oh ! how dark, how drear, how lone
Would seem the brightest world of bliss,

If wandering through each radiant zone,
We failed to find the loved of this !
If there no more the ties should twine,
Which death's cold hand alone can sever,
Ah ! then these stars in mockery shine,
More hateful as they shine forever.

It cannot be ! — each hope and fear
That blights the eye or clouds the brow,
Proclaims there is a happier sphere
Than this black world that holds us now !
There is a voice which sorrow hears,
When heaviest weighs life's galling chain ;
'Tis heaven that whispers " dry thy tears —
The pure in heart shall meet again ! "

HOPE'S BRIGHTER SHORE.

THRICE happy he whom through each devious path
The Lamp of Faith conducts with steady light !
His spirit quails not at the tempest's wrath ;
He trembles not when lowers the moonless night,
Nor fears the Ocean's roar.
O ! life may have its sorrows and its cares,
Yet come they but from sin to purify ;
While Death itself, the power that never spares,
Is but the soul-bark of Mortality,
Seeking a brighter shore !

FORGIVENESS OF ERROR.

FROM north and south, from east and west,
Advance the myriads of the blest :
From every clime of earth they come,
And find in heaven a common home.

In one immortal throng we view
Pagan and Christian, Greek and Jew ;
But, all their doubts and darkness o'er,
One only God they now adore.

Howe'er divided here below,
One bliss, one spirit, now they know ,
Though some ne'er heard of Jesus' name
Yet God admits their honest claim.

On earth, according to their light,
They aimed to practise what was right ;
Hence all their errors are forgiven,
And Jesus welcomes them to heaven.

BUTCHER.

CONVERSION.

God's voice doth sometimes fall on us with fear ;
More often with a music low yet clear,

Soft whispering "It is I: be not afraid."
And sometimes, mingling strangely joy with dread,
It thrills the spirit's caverned sepulchre
Deep as that voice which on the awe-struck ear
Of him, the three-days buried, murmuring, said
"Come forth"—and he arose. Oh! Christians, hail
As brethren all on whom our glorious Sun,
No matter how, or when, or where, hath shone
With vital warmth; and neither mourn nor rail
Because one light, itself unchanging, showers
A thousand colors on a thousand flowers.

DE VERE.

THE STARS.

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work."
—*Psalm xix. 1.*

No cloud obscures the summer sky,
The moon in brightness walks on high,
And, set in azure, every star
Shines, like a gem of heaven, afar!

Child of the earth! oh! lift thy glance
To yon bright firmament's expanse;
The glories of its realm explore,
And gaze, and wonder, and adore!

Doth it not speak to every sense
The marvels of Omnipotence?

Seest thou not there the Almighty name,
Inscribed in characters of flame ?

Count o'er those lamps of quenchless light,
That sparkle through the shades of night !
Behold them ! — can a mortal boast
To number that celestial host ?

Mark well each little star, whose rays
In distant splendor meet thy gaze ;
Each is a world by Him sustained,
Who from eternity hath reigned.

Each, shining not for earth alone,
Hath suns and planets of its own,
And beings, whose existence springs
From Him the all-powerful King of kings.

Haply, those glorious beings know
Nor stain of guilt, nor tear of wo !
But raising still the adoring voice,
For ever in their God rejoice.

What then art thou, oh ! child of clay !
Amid creation's grandeur, say ?
— E'en as an insect on the breeze,
E'en as a dew-drop, lost in seas !

Yet fear thou not ! — the sovereign hand,
Which spread the ocean and the land,

And hung the rolling spheres in air,
Hath, e'en for thee, a Father's care !

Be thou at peace ! — the all-seeing eye,
Pervading earth, and air, and sky,
The searching glance which none may flee,
Is still, in mercy, turned on thee.

ANGELIC MINISTRY.

AND is there care in Heaven ? And is there love
In heavenly spirits to these creatures base,
That may compassion of their evils move ?
There is : — else much more wretched were the case
Of men than beasts : but O ! the exceeding grace
Of highest God, that loves His creatures so,
And all His works with mercy doth embrace,
That blessed Angels He sends to and fro,
To serve to wicked man, to serve His wicked foe !

How oft do they their silver bowers leave,
To come to succor us that succor want !
How oft do they with golden pinions cleave
The flitting skies, like flying pursuivant,
Against foul fiends to aid us militant !
They for us fight, they watch and duly ward,
And their bright squadrons round about us plant ;
And all for love and nothing for reward ;
O, why should heavenly God to men have such regard ?

EDMUND SPENSER.—1553-1598-9.

GOD'S LOVE UNCHANGEABLE.

EVERY human tie may perish ;
Friend to friend unfaithful prove
Mothers cease their own to cherish,
Heaven and earth at last remove ;
But no changes
Can avert the Father's love.

In the furnace God may prove thee,
Thence to bring thee forth more bright ;
But can never cease to love thee ;
Thou art precious in his sight :
God is with thee, —
God, thine everlasting light.

KELLEY.

JUDGE GENTLY.

Oh, there has many a tear been shed.
And many a heart been broken,
For want of a gentle hand stretched forth,
Or a word in kindness spoken.

Then oh, with brotherly regard
Greet every son of sorrow,
So from each tone of love his heart
New hope, new strength, shall borrow.

Nor turn, with cold and scornful eye,
From him who hath offended,
But let the harshness of reproof
With kindest tones be blended.

The seeds of good are every where ;
And, in the guiltiest bosom,
Would, by the quickening rays of love,
Put forth their tender blossom ;—

While many a tempted soul hath been
To deeds of evil hardened,
Who felt that bitterness of grief,
The first offence unpardon'd.

THOU ART NOT LOST.

Thou art not lost.—Thy spirit giveth
Immortal peace, and high it liveth !
Thou art not mute.—With angels blending,
Thy voice is still to me descending.

Thou art not absent.—Sweetly smiling,
I see thee yet, my griefs beguiling !
Soft, o'er my slumbers art thou beaming,
The sunny spirit of my dreaming !

Thine eyelids seem not yet concealing
In death their orbs of matchless feeling ;

Their living charms my heart stil. numbers ;
Ah ! sure they do but veil thy slumbers !

As kind thou art ; — for still thou'rt meeting
This breast, which gives the tender greeting !
And shall I deem thee altered ? — Never !
Thou'rt with me waking — dreaming — ever !

THE MISSION OF CHRIST UNIVERSAL.

Oh, yes ! there is joy in sincerely believing,
No heart that is faithless can dream of, or know ;
There is strength in the thought that our souls are receiving
Such wealth as a *Father* alone can bestow.
Then away with the dogma that sin is eternal !
It dims the bright glow of Immanuel's name ;
For it was not to build up a kingdom infernal
That Jesus, the Friend of the sorrowful, came.

It was not to lay in the path of the blinded
High walls, over which they must stumble and fall,
That He came, all sublime and serene and high-minded,
And laid down his life — a redemption for all !
It was not to slaughter, in anger and blindness,
The wandering lambs that were dying of cold,
That he lifted them up to his bosom in kindness,
And brought them all home to their rest in the fold.

He is *good*,— and the heart that serenely reposes
And lays down its burthens to rest in his love,
Will find that the door of salvation ne'er closes
So long as one sinner continues to rovè.
He loves the young lambs, though afar they are straying,
He seeks out the weary with tender concern ;
Oh hear His soft voice in the wilderness praying,
“ To the arms of your Saviour poor lost ones
return ! ”

MRS. S. C EDGARTON MAYO.—1819-1848.

THE GOSPEL'S PROMISES FOR ALL.

POUR, blessed Gospel, glorious news for man !
Thy stream of life o'er springless deserts roll :
Thy bond of peace the mighty earth can span,
And make one brotherhood from pole to pole.

On, piercing Gospel, on ! of every heart,
In every latitude, thou own'st the key :
From their dull slumbers savage souls shall start,
With all their treasures first unlocked by thee.

Spread, mighty Gospel, spread thy soaring wings !
Gather thy scattered ones from every land :
Call home the wanderers to the King of kings ;
Proclaim them all thine own ; 'tis Christ's command !

C. ASHWORTH.—1709-1744.

A WALK IN A CHURCHYARD.

WE walked within the churchyard bounds,
My little boy and I;
He, laughing, running happy rounds —
I, pacing mournfully.

“ Nay, child, it is not well,” I said,
“ Among the graves to shout,
To laugh and play among the dead,
And make this noisy rout.”

A moment to my side he clung,
Leaving his merry play,
A moment stilled his joyous tongue,
Almost as hushed as they.

Then quite forgetting the command,
In life’s exulting burst
Of early glee, let go my hand,
Joyous as at the first.

And now I did not check him more,
For, taught by Nature’s face,
I had grown wiser than before,
E’en in that moment’s space.

She spread no funeral-pall above
That patch of churchyard ground,

But the same azure vault of love
As hung o'er all around.

And white clouds o'er that spot would pass
As freely as elsewhere;
The sunshine on no other grass
A richer hue might wear.

And, formed from out that very mould
In which the dead did lie,
The daisy, with its eye of gold,
Looked up into the sky.

The rook was wheeling overhead,
Nor hastened to be gone;
The small bird did its glad notes shed,
Perched on a gray headstone.

And God, I said, would never give
This light upon the earth,
Nor bid in childhood's heart to live
These springs of gushing mirth,

If our one wisdom were to mourn,
And linger with the dead,
To nurse, as wisest, thoughts forlorn
Of worm and earthy bed.

Oh, no ! the glory earth puts on,
The child's unchecked delight,

Both witness to a triumph won,
If we but read aright ; —

A triumph won o'er sin and death,
From these the Saviour saves ;
And, like a happy infant, Faith
Can play among the graves.

PUPIL AND TUTOR.

P. WHAT shall I do, lest life in silence pass ?

T. And if it do,

And never prompt the bray of noisy brass,
What need'st thou rue ?

Remember aye the ocean deeps are mute,
The shallows roar.

Worth is the ocean ; fame is but the bruit
Along the shore.

P. What shall I do to be forever known ?

T. Thy duty ever.

P. This did full many who yet sleep unknown.

T. Oh ! never, never.

Think'st thou perchance that they remain unknown
Whom thou know'st not ?

By angel trumps in heaven their praise is blown,
Divine their lot !

P. What shall I do to have eternal life ?

T. Discharge aright

The simple dues with which the day is rife,
Yea, with thy might.

Ere perfect scheme of action thou devise,
Will life be fled ;

While he who ever acts as Conscience cries,
Shall live, though dead.

LIFE'S DISCIPLINE A TRAINING FOR HEAVEN.

ALL speaks of change : the renovated forms
Of long-forgotten things arise again.

The light of suns, the breath of angry storms,
The everlasting motions of the main,—

These are but engines of the Eternal will,
The One Intelligence, whose potent sway
Has ever acted, and is acting still,
Whilst stars, and worlds, and systems all obey ;

Without Whose power, the whole of mortal things
Were dull, inert, an unharmonious band,
Silent as are the harp's untunéd strings
Without the touches of the poet's hand.

A sacred spark, created by His breath,
The immortal mind of man His image bears ;

A spirit living 'midst the forms of death,
Oppressed, but not subdued, by mortal cares ;

A germ, preparing in the winter's frost
To rise, and bud, and blossom in the spring ;
An unfledged eagle by the tempest tossed,
Unconscious of his future strength of wing ;

The child of trial, to mortality
And all its changeful influences given ;
On the green earth decreed to move and die,
And yet, by such a fate, prepared for heaven !

SIR HUMPHRY DAVY.—1778-1829.

WISDOM.

AH ! when did wisdom covet length of days ?
Or seek its bliss in pleasure, wealth, or praise ?
No : wisdom views, with an indifferent eye,
All finite joys, all blessings born to die.
The soul on earth is an immortal guest,
Compelled to starve at an unreal feast ;
A spark that upward tends by nature's force,
A stream diverted from its parent source ;
A drop dissevered from the boundless sea,
A moment parted from eternity !
A pilgrim panting for a rest to come ;
An exile anxious for his native home.

ALL THINGS ARE YOURS.

OPE, ope, my Soul ! around thee press
A thousand things divine ;
All Glory and all Holiness
Are waiting to be thine.

Lie open, Soul ! be swift to catch
Each glory ere it flies ;
Life's hours are charged, to those who watch,
With heavenly messages.

Lie open ; Love and Duty stand,
Thy guardian angels, near ;
To lead thee gently by the hand,—
Their words of welcome hear !

Lie open, Soul ! the Beautiful
That all things doth embrace,
Shall every passion sweetly lull
And clothe thee in her grace.

Lie open, Soul ! the Great and Wise
About thy portal throng,
The wealth of souls before thee lies,
Their gifts to thee belong.

Lie open, Soul ! lo, Jesus waits
To enter thine abode ;

Messiah lingers at thy gates,—
Let in the Son of God !

Receive Him, Soul ! He with Him brings
The blest ones from above ;
The heavenly hosts stretch forth their wings
To seek and know thy love.

Lie open, Soul ! in watchfulness
Each brighter glory win ;
The Infinite thy peace shall bless,
And God shall enter in !

O awful joy ! O Life divine !
O bliss too great, too full !
Earth, Man, Heaven, Angels, all are thine
And thou art God's, my Soul !

H. NEW.

THE HEART OF UNBELIEF.

NIGHT without star or eve or dawning, gloom
Intense and chill and palpable, lay spread
Where sat the Atheist, lone, within a tomb,—
Pale watcher of the dead !—

Each beautiful Belief whose living form
Within the spirit's Pantheon rose enshrined ;
Each Faith whose radiant wing shed sudden morn
Upon the illumined mind ;

Each Hope that stood with angel-finger spired
And pointing to the illimitable sky,
Revealed in tones with inspiration fired
The Soul's great destiny ; —

All to that unbelieving heart had died,
Filling with spectral shapes the haunted breast,
And left him in the midnight, sorely tried,
Watching their awful rest.

Grave seemed to shout to grave like deep to deep,
The blind worms revelled in the festering sod,
And a voice came, as death comes following sleep,
“ There is no Soul, no God ! ”

“ No Soul, no God ! ” this wail for evermore
Beat, surging o'er his rigid lips of stone,
Like the wild breakers, on some wintry shore,
Making perpetual moan.

Wondering I gazed and mused and wept the while,
When, lo ! a seraph passed before my face,
And the calm beauty of his peaceful smile
With day filled all the place.

“ Wouldst know,” he said, “ why Pain and Fear and
Night
With dark and desolate pinions o'er him sweep ?
Learn thou that Sin clouds heaven from human sight :
He sowed as he doth reap !

“ Doubt is the eternal shade by Evil cast !

‘ The vision and the faculty divine ’

Fail when the spirit o'er its empire vast

Thrones Appetite and Crime.

“ Only the ear in chord with goodness grown,

Hears the full tide of Truth’s immortal hymn,

The heart where living virtues bloom alone,

God’s angels enter in !

“ Write the great law in alphabet of flame,

Sound it with prophecy and psalm abroad ;

Doubt’s awful tempests veil the tents of shame :

The pure alone see God ! ”

THOMAS L. HARRIS.

THE DEAD.

THE dead alone are great !

While heavenly plants abide on earth,

The soil is one of dewless death ;

But when they die, a mourning shower

Comes down and makes their memories flower

With odors sweet though late.

The dead alone are fair !

While they are with us, strange lines play

Before our eyes, and chase away

God's light ; but let them pale and die,
And swell the stores of memory —
There is no envy there.

The dead alone are dear !
While they are here, long shadows fall
From our own forms, and darken all ;
But when they leave us, all the shade
Is round our own sad footsteps made,
And they are bright and clear.

The dead alone are blest !
While they are here, clouds mar the day,
And bitter snow-falls nip their May ;
But when the tempest-time is done,
The light and heat of Heaven's own sun
Broods on their land of rest.

HENRY ALFORE.

PROMISED LIGHT.

“ At evening time it shall be light.”
I thank Thee for thy promise, Lord ;
Through all this weary darkling fight
What comfort these sweet words afford !

“ At evening time it shall be light.”
Then why, my soul, so sad and low ?
Strengthen thyself in heaven-sprung might,
And on thy way rejoicing go.

“ At evening time it shall be light.”

Then how canst thou e'er dare to fear,
Though now the sky may not be bright —
No kindly hand or voice be near ?

Although the tempest round thee roar,
And thou mayst seem forsaken quite,
Yet cheer, faint heart, 'twill soon be o'er :
“ At evening time it shall be light.”

The clouds that hide the sun all day,
And keep his glories from our sight,
As night draws on, shall melt away,
“ At evening time it shall be light.”

IMMORTALITY.

THE insect bursting from its tomb-like bed —
The grain that in a thousand grains revives —
The trees that seem in wintry torpor dead —
Yet each new year renewing their green lives ;
All teach, without the added aid of Faith,
That life still triumphs o'er apparent death !

But dies the insect when the summer dies ;
The grain hath perished, though the plant remain ;
In death, at last, the oak of ages lies ;
Here Reason halts, nor further can attain,

For Reason argues but from what she sees,
Nor traces to their goal these mysteries.

But Faith the dark hiatus can supply —
Teaching, eternal progress still shall reign ;
Telling (as these things aid her to espy)
In higher worlds that higher laws obtain ;
Pointing, with radiant finger raised on high,
From life that still revives, to life that cannot die !

CHRISTIAN TRUST.

GIVE to the winds thy fears ;
Hope and be undismayed ;
God hears thy sighs and counts thy tears ;
God shall lift up thy head.
Through waves, through clouds and storms,
He gently clears thy way ;
Wait thou His time ; so shall the night
Soon end in joyous day.

He everywhere hath way,
And all things serve His might ;
His every act pure blessing is,
His paths, unsullied light.
When He makes bare His arm,
What shall His work withstand ?
When He His people's cause defends,
Who, who shall stay His hand ?

Leave to His sovereign sway
To choose and to command ;
With wonder filled, thou then shalt own
How wise, how strong, His hand.
Thou comprehend'st Him not ;
Yet earth and heaven tell,
God sits as sovereign on the throne —
He ruleth all things well.

Thou seest our weakness, Lord !
Our hearts are known to Thee ;
O lift Thou up the sinking head,
Confirm the feeble knee !
Let us, in life and death,
Boldly Thy truth declare,
And publish with our latest breath
Thy love and guardian care.

P. GERHARDT.

LIVE AND HELP LIVE.

MIGHTY in faith and hope, why art thou sad ?
Sever the green withes, look up and be glad !
See all around thee, below and above,
The beautiful, beautiful gifts of God's love !

What though our hearts beat with death's sullen
waves ?
What though the green sod is broken with graves ?

The sweet hopes that never shall fade from their bloom,
Make their dim birth-chamber down in the tomb !

Parsee or Christianman, bondman or free,
Loves and humilities still are for thee ;
Some little good every day to achieve,
Some slighted spirit no longer to grieve.

In the tents of the desert, alone on the sea,
On the far-away hills with the starry Chaldee ;
Condemned and in prison, dishonored, reviled,
God's arm is around thee, and thou art His child.

Mine be the lip ever truthful and bold ;
Mine be the heart never careless nor cold ;
A faith humbly trustful, a life free from blame —
All else is unstable as flax in the flame.

And while the soft skies are so starry and blue ;
And while the wide earth is so fresh with God's dew,
Though all around me the sad sit and sigh,
I will be glad that I live and must die.

ALICE CAREY.

RELIGIOUS CASUISTRY.

My heart is sick, my whole head drooping faints
With all this coil of Sabbaths and of saints :
Even as of yore the Pharisaic tribe,
Lawyer astute, and casuistic Scribe,

Their grievous loads on weak men's shoulders laid,
Yet would not, could not, lend a finger's aid,
So still God's Law, with human fancies fraught,
Is circumscribed, belied, and set at naught.

One damns the use of some indifferent dish,
And pins his hopes of heaven on Wednesday fish;
This shakes his head, and "doubts if grace be sent
To those who pray by Act of Parliament;"
That "hopes the best for Schismatists, but can't
See aught for them within the covenant."

Meantime the inquirer, penitent and lone,
Who gropes in darkness for the Altar Stone,
Disturbed by doubt, by wakening conscience vexed,
And the remembrance of some child-learnt text,
Ponders amazed, if one of these be true,
Where all the other sects are wandering to;
And turns from priest to priest with vacant eye,
"How shall I save my soul?" his anxious cry.

One preaching this for truth, and that another,
Proves himself fallible, if wrong his brother;
For all, with instinct's true consent, declare
God's covenant, a blessing, not a snare.

"Faith Catholic," they cry, "is to receive
What all men, always, everywhere believe:"
Well said—but O! how sadly missed the uses
Of this, their own, *experimentum crucis*—
While all dispute on points of doctrine, none
Doubt what Religion teaches to be DONE.

Bear sorrow here, and look to Heaven for bliss—
This thy theology, thy practice this:

Believe God's promises, his precepts keep,
Joy with the joyful, with the mourner weep,
Exalt Love's banner, evermore unfurled,
And keep thyself unspotted from the world.

O blest indeed, if thus we knew our good,
O blest even on this Earth, if but we would !
Sure that, though shades close densely round our way,
The path of Duty leads to perfect day.

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

THE FOUNTAIN OF GRACE.

"O Lord, open Thou my lips ; and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise."

THE prayers I make will then be sweet indeed,
If Thou the spirit give by which I pray ;
My unassisted heart is barren clay,
That of its native self can nothing feed :
Of good and pious works Thou art the seed
That quickens only where Thou say'st it may :
Unless Thou show to us Thine own true way
No man can find it : Father ! Thou must lead.
Do Thou, then, breathe those thoughts into my mind
By which such virtue may in me be bred
That in Thy holy footsteps I may tread ;
The fetters of my tongue do Thou unbind,
That I may have the power to sing of Thee,
And sound Thy praises everlasting.

MICHAEL ANGELO. — 1474-1564.

THE ELOQUENT PASTOR.

HE taught the cheerfulness that still is ours,
The sweetness that still lurks in human powers ;—
If heaven be full of stars, the earth has flowers !

His was the searching thought, the glowing mind ;
The gentle will to others' soon resigned ;
But, more than all, the feeling just and kind.

His pleasures were as melodies from reeds,—
Sweet books, deep music and unselfish deeds,
Finding immortal flowers in human weeds.

True to his kind, nor of himself afraid,
He deemed that love of God was best arrayed
In love of all the things that God has made.

He deemed man's life no feverish dream of care,
But a high pathway into freer air,
Lit up with golden hopes and duties fair.

He showed how wisdom turns its hours to years,
Feeding the heart on joys instead of fears,
And worships God in smiles, and not in tears.

His thoughts were as a pyramid up-piled,
On whose far top an angel stood and smiled,—
Yet in his heart was he a simple child.

LAMAN BLANCHARD.—1803-1845.

UNIVERSALITY OF REDEMPTION

YE nations, worship at the call !
Emmanuel comes, to rescue all
From death's relentless doom ;
Thou slumbering world, awake and see
Thy life and immortality
In yon poor manger's gloom !

Lay down your worthy offerings here ;
The myrrh he loves is sorrow's tear,
O'er conscious guilt distilled ;
His frankincense the grateful sigh
Of guilt redeemed from misery —
Thus be his temple filled !

" Peace and good will " to earth he brings,
And heaven that hears, in transport sings !
Oh ! turn to him alone,
Turk, Heathen, Jew ! till heaven behold
One Shepherd, and one spotless fold
Surround Jehovah's throne.

HODGSON.

BLESSED ARE THE DEAD.

O, how blest are ye whose toils are ended !
Who, through death, have unto God ascended !
Ye have arisen
From the cares which keep us still in prison.

We are still as in a dungeon living,
Still oppressed with sorrow and misgiving ;
Our undertakings
Are but toils, and troubles, and heart-breakings.

Christ has wiped away *your* tears forever ;
Ye have that for which we still endeavor.
To you are chanted
Songs which yet no mortal ear have haunted.

Ah ! who would not, then, depart with gladness,
To inherit heaven for earthly sadness ?
Who here would languish
Longer in bewailing and in anguish ?

Come, O Christ, and loose the chains that bind us !
Lead us forth, and cast this world behind us.
With thee, th' Anointed,
Finds the soul its joy and rest appointed.

FROM THE GERMAN OF DACH BY LONGFELLOW.

MAN EVER RESTLESS.

WHEN God at first made man,
Having a fount of blessings standing by,
Let us, said he, pour on him all we can ;
Let the world's riches, which disperséd lie,
Contract into a span.

So strength first made a way ;
Then beauty flowed, then wisdom, honour, pleasure ;
When almost all was out, God made a stay ;
Perceiving, that alone, of all his treasure,
Rest, in the bottom lay.

For if I should, said he,
Bestow *this* jewel also on my creature,
He would adore my gifts instead of me ;
And rest in nature, not the God of nature ; —
So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness ;
Let him be rich, and weary ; that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to my breast.

GEORGE HERBERT. — 1593-1632.

ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT.

WITH what unknown delight the mother smiled,
When this frail treasure in her arms she pressed !
Her prayer was heard,—she clasped a living child,—
But how the gift transcends the poor request !
A child was all she asked, with many a vow ;
Mother, behold the child an angel now !

Now in her Father's house she finds a place ;
Or, if to earth she take a transient flight,
'Tis to fulfil the purpose of His grace,
To guide thy footsteps to the world of light ; —
A ministering spirit sent to thee,
That where she is, there thou mayst also be.

JANE TAYLOR. — 1733-1823.

VIA CRUCIS, VIA LUCIS.*

THROUGH the cross comes the crown ; when the cares
of this life
Like giants in strength may to crush thee combine,
Never mind, never mind ! after sorrow's sad strife,
Shall the peace and the crown of salvation be thine.

Through woe comes delight : if at evening thou sigh,
And thy soul still at midnight in sorrow appears,
Never mind, never mind ! for the morning is nigh,
Whose sunbeams of gladness shall dry up thy tears !

Through death comes our life : to the portal of pain,
Through Time's thistle fields are our weary steps
driven ;
Never mind, never mind ! through this passage we gain
The mansions of light and the portals of heaven.

FROM THE GERMAN OF KOSEGARTEN.

* The way of the Cross, the way of Light.

MY TIMES ARE IN THY HAND.

My times are in Thy hand !
. I know not what a day
Or e'en an hour may bring to me ;
But I am safe while trusting Thee,
Though all things fade away.

All weakness, I
On Him rely,
Who fixed the earth and starry sky.

My times are in Thy hand !
Pale poverty or wealth,
Corroding cares or calm repose,
Spring's balmy breath or Winter's snows,
Sickness or buoyant health, —

Whate'er betide,
If God provide,
'Tis for the best — I wish no lot beside.

My times are in Thy hand !
Should friendship pure illume
And strew my path with fairest flowers,
Or should I spend life's dreary hours
In solitude's dark gloom,

Thou art a friend
Till time shall end,
Unchangeably the same ; in Thee all beauties blend.

My times are in Thy hand !
Many or few my days,
I leave with Thee — this only pray,
That by Thy grace I, every day
Devoting to Thy praise,
May ready be
To welcome Thee,
Whene'er Thou comest to set my spirit free.

My times are in Thy hand !
Howe'er those times may end,
Sudden or slow my soul's release,
'Midst anguish, frenzy, or in peace,
I'm safe with Christ, my friend.
If He be nigh,
Howe'er I die,
'Twill be the dawn of heavenly ecstacy.

FRAGMENTS.

I.

UPON your heart this truth may rise :
Nothing that altogether dies
Suffices man's just destinies.

So should we live, that every Hour
May die as dies the natural flower, —
A self-reviving thing of power ;

That every Thought and every Deed
May hold within itself the seed
Of future good and future meed ;

Esteeming Sorrow, whose employ
Is to develope, not destroy,
Far better than a barren Joy.

II.

O ye ! who talk of Death, and mourn for Death,
Why do you raise a phantom of your weakness,
And then shriek loud to see what ye have made ?
There is no Death, to those who know of Life —
No Time to those who see Eternity.

RICHARD M. MILNES.

TO THE DANDELION.

My childhood's earliest thoughts are linked with
thee ;
The sight of thee calls back the robin's song,
Who, from the dark old tree
Beside the door sung clearly all day long,
And I, secure in childish piety,
Listened as if I heard an angel sing
With news from Heaven, which he did bring
Fresh every day to my untainted ears,
When birds and flowers and I were happy peers.

Thou art the type of those meek charities
Which make up half the nobleness of life,
 Those cheap delights the wise
Pluck from the dusty wayside of earth's strife ;
 Words of frank cheer, glances of friendly eyes,
Love's smallest coin, which yet to some may give
 The morsel that shall keep alive
A starving heart, and teach it to behold
Some glimpse of God where all before was cold.

Thy wingéd seeds, whereof the winds take care,
Are like the words of poet and of sage
 Which through the free heaven fare,
And, now unheeded, in another age
 Take root, and to the gladdened future bear
That witness which the present would not heed,
 Bringing forth many a thought and deed,
And, planted safely in the eternal sky,
Bloom into stars which earth is guided by.

Full of deep love thou art, yet not more full
Than all thy common brethren of the ground,
 Wherein, were we not dull,
Some words of highest wisdom might be found ;
 Yet earnest faith from day to day may cull
Some syllables, which, rightly joined, can make
 A spell to soothe life's bitterest ache,
And ope Heaven's portals, which are near us still,
Yea, nearer ever than the gates of Ill.

How like a prodigal doth nature seem,
When thou, for all thy gold, so common art !
Thou teachest me to deem
More sacredly of every human heart,
Since each reflects in joy its scanty gleam
Of heaven, and could some wondrous secret show,
Did we but pay the love we owe,
And with a child's undoubting wisdom look
On all these living pages of God's book.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

THE LAW OF MERCY.

'Tis written with the pen of heavenly Love
On every heart which skill divine has moulded ;
A transcript from the statute book above,
Where angels read their Sovereign's will unfolded.

It bids us seek the holes where Famine lurks,
Clutching the hoarded crust with trembling fingers ;
Where Toil in damp unwholesome caverns works,
Or with strained eyeballs o'er the needle lingers.

It bids us stand beside the dying bed
Of those about to quit the world forever,
Smooth the tossed pillow, prop the sinking head,
Cheer the heart-broken, whom death hastes to sever.

It bids us tell the tempted that the joy
Of guilt indulged, will change ere long to sorrow ;

The draft of sickly sweetness soon will cloy,
And pall upon the sated taste tomorrow.

And those who copy thus Christ's life on earth,
Feeding the poor, and comforting the weeper,
Will all receive a meed of priceless worth,
When ripely gathered by the heavenly Reaper.

TRUST IN PROVIDENCE.

WHILST Thee I seek, protecting Power!
Be my vain wishes stilled;
And may this consecrated hour
With better hopes be filled.

Thy love the power of thought bestowed,
To Thee my thoughts would soar;
Thy mercy o'er my life has flowed;
That mercy I adore.

In each event of life, how clear
Thy ruling hand I see!
Each blessing to my soul more dear
Because conferred by Thee.

In every joy that crowns my days,
In every pain I bear,
My heart shall find delight in praise,
Or seek relief in prayer.

When gladness wings my favored hour,
Thy love my thoughts shall fill ;
Resigned, when storms of sorrow lower,
My soul shall meet Thy will.

My lifted eye without a tear
The gathering storm shall see ;
My steadfast heart shall know no fear ;
That heart will rest on Thee.

HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.—1762-1827.

GOD'S PURPOSES.

"Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness."

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform ;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take ;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace ;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour ;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain ;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.

W.M. COWPER.—1731-1800.

NOTHING GOOD WILL PERISH.

NOTHING good shall ever perish,
Only the corrupt shall die ;
Truth, which men and angels cherish,
Flourishes eternally.

None are wholly God-forsaken,
All His sacred image bear ;
None so lost but should awaken
In our hearts a brother's care.

Not a mind but has its wisdom —
Power of working wo or weal ;
So degraded none's condition
But the world its weight may feel.

Words of kindness, words of warning,
Deem not thou may'st work in vain,
Even those thy counsel scorning,
Oft shall they return again.

Though the mind absorbed in pleasure
Holds the voice of counsel light,
Still doth faithful memory treasure,
What at first we seemed to slight.

Words of kindness we have spoken,
May, when we have passed away,
Heal, perhaps, a spirit broken,
Guide a brother led astray.

No one act but is recorded ;
Not a word but has its weight :
Every virtue is rewarded —
Outrage punished soon or late.

Let no being then be rated
As a thing of little worth :
Every soul that is created,
Has its part to play on earth.

J. HAGEN.

“FOR I SHALL YET PRAISE HIM.”

WHILE the Angels are all singing,
All of glory ever springing
In the grounds of Heaven’s high graces
Where all virtues have their places,
O that my poor soul were near them
With a humble heart to hear them !

But ah ! wretched, sinful creature !
How should the corrupted nature
Of this wicked heart of mine
Think upon that love divine,
That doth tune the Angels’ voices,
Whilst the Host of Heaven rejoices ?

Yet while Mercy is removing
All the sorrow of the loving,
How can Faith be full of blindness,
To despair of Mercy’s kindness,
While the hand of Heaven is giving
Comfort from the Ever-Living ?

No ! my Soul, be no more sorry !
Look unto that life of glory,
Which the grace of Faith regardeth,
And the tears of Love rewardeth,
Where the soul the Comfort getteth,
That the Angels’ music setteth !

There, when thou art well conducted,
And by heavenly grace instructed,
How the faithful thoughts to fashion
Of a true adorer's passion,
Sing with saints to Angels nighest,
“ Hallelujah in the highest ! ”

BRETON.

THE PRESENT LIFE IN VIEW OF THE FUTURE.

Or, if we are not bitterly deceived —
If this familiar spirit that communes
With yours this hour — that has the power to search
All things but its own compass — *is* a spark
Struck from the burning essence of its God —
If, as we dream, in every radiant star
We see a shining gate through which the soul,
In its degrees of being, will ascend —
If, when these weary organs drop away,
We shall forget their uses and commune
With angels and each other, as the stars
Mingle their light, in silence and in love —
What is this fleshly fetter of a day
That we should bind it with immortal flowers !
How do we ever gaze upon the sky,
And watch the lark soar up till he is lost,
And turn to our poor perishing dreams away,
Without one tear for our imprisoned wings !

N. P. WILLIS.

GOD'S MERCIES.

"Every day will I bless Thee ; and I will praise Thy name for ever and ever."

WHEN all Thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys ;
Transported with the view I'm lost
In wonder, love and praise.

O how shall words with equal warmth
The gratitude declare,
That glows within my ravished heart ?
But Thou canst read it there !

Thy providence my life sustained,
And all my wants redrest,
When in the silent womb I lay,
And hung upon the breast.

To all my weak complaints and cries
Thy mercy lent an ear,
Ere yet my feeble thoughts had learned
To form themselves in prayer.

Unnumbered comforts to my soul
Thy tender care bestowed,
Before my infant heart conceived
From whom those comforts flowed.

When in the slippery paths of youth
With heedless steps I ran,

Thine arm unseen conveyed me safe,
And led me up to man.

Through hidden dangers, toils, and deaths,
It gently cleared my way,
And through the pleasing snares of vice
More to be feared than they.

When worn with sickness, oft hast Thou
With health renewed my face,
And when in sin and sorrows sunk,
Revived my soul with grace.

Thy bounteous hand with worldly bliss
Has made my cup run o'er ;
And in a kind and faithful friend
Has doubled all my store.

Ten thousand thousand precious gifts
My daily thanks employ ;
Nor is the least a cheerful heart,
That tastes those gifts with joy.

Through every period of my life
Thy goodness I'll pursue ;
And, after death, in distant worlds
The glorious theme renew.

When nature fails, and day and night
Divide Thy works no more,

My ever grateful heart, O Lord,
Thy mercy shall adore.

Through all eternity to Thee
A joyful song I'll raise,
For, O ! eternity's too short
To utter all Thy praise.

JOSEPH ADDISON.—1672-1719.

THE CRY OF THE HUMBLE.

"He forgetteth not the cry of the humble."

SOUL ! fear not lest the harmony
Of spheres all tuneful at one time
Great Nature's myriad-voicéd chime
For thy weak voice too strong may be.

O ! all the while the spheres are ringing,
Yea, while the seven bright Heavens are singing,
While all the people of the sky
Unto their Lord make melody,—

The Lord still listens for thy part !
Each echo from a lonely heart
Upbeareth heavenward, ere it dieth,
The humblest voice " My God !" that crieth.

LAMARTINE.

THE BOOK OF NATURE.

"All Thy works praise Thee, O Lord, and Thy saints shall bless Thee."

THERE is a book, who runs may read,
Which heavenly truth imparts,
And all the lore its scholars need,
Pure eyes and Christian hearts.

The works of God above, below,
Within us and around,
Are pages in that book, to show
How God Himself is found.

The glorious sky embracing all
Is like the Maker's love,
Wherewith encompassed, great and small
In peace and order move.

Two worlds are ours : 'tis only Sin
Forbids us to descry
The mystic heaven and earth within,
Plain as the sea and sky.

Thou, who hast given me eyes to see
And love this sight so fair,
Give me a heart to find out Thee,
And read Thee everywhere.

KEBLE.

THY KINGDOM COME.

LISTEN, awake, inquire :
What doth the watchman cry ?
Is He, who proves the earth by fire,
Descending nigh ?

What doth the watchman say,
Whose call the slumberer wakes ?
“ The night hath nearly passed away ;
The morning breaks.”

Priests ! statesmen ! be not dumb ;
Seers ! Peoples ! shout aloud,
“ Lord, let Thy kingdom quickly come !
O'erthrow the proud ! ”

Princes and nobles all !
Hark to the solemn cry :
Beneath your Judge oppressions fall .
Your time draws nigh.

Tremble, ye men of ease,
Who worship self for God :
Wide sweeps the sword of His decrees :
Severe His rod !

Stand up and brace the heart ;
Take courage, brethren brave !

Prepare to act a noble part :
God smites to save.

In war He is our peace ;
Men's thunder is His voice :
Through sufferings sharp He brings release :
Believe ! rejoice !

The hours with steady flight
Haste on the glorious year :
The triumph of Eternal right
Shall soon appear.

In those more blessed days
The children of mankind
Beneath their God's benignant gaze
Mild Peace shall find.

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S LOVE.

O ! would you be assured you love your God,
Make Him a God that must be loved of need,
A God you cannot otherwise than love.
Throw off that yoke of joyless servitude,
That niggard balancing of right and wrong,
Which fears to give too little or too much.
Doubt is not love — suspicion is not love !
Believe that He has known you, pitied you,

Taken you Himself from prison and from death,
Sought and pursued you through a world of ill —
Restrained you, taught you, reared you for His own.
Believe that He forgives you every sin,
Pays every debt, and cancels every claim —
Watches beside your pillow while you sleep,
Supports you, leads you, guards you when you wake,
And bids His angels know no better task
Than to administer to you His child ; —
And while in heaven's high mansion He prepares
The seat of royalty He bids you claim,
Arrays you in a vesture so divine,
Of holiness and virtue not your own,
That when the hour of just adjudgment comes,
All may confess in you the heir of heaven.
Believe the Lord your God is such an one,
And you must love Him, even to your soul.

CAROLINE FRY

THE UNSEARCHABLE.

"O ! God most hidden and most manifest." — *St. Augustine.*

O HEIGHT that doth all height excel,
Where the Almighty doth abide !
O awful depth unsearchable,
Wherein the Eternal One doth hide !

O dreadful glory that doth make
Thick darkness round the Heavenly Throne,

Through which no angel eye may break,
Wherein the Lord doth dwell alone !

Our fainting souls the quest give o'er,
Their weary wings no longer try ;
His dwelling we may not explore,
We may not on His glory pry.

What secret place, what distant star,
Is like, dread Lord, to Thine abode ?
Why dwellest Thou from us so far ?
We yearn for Thee, Thou Hidden God !

Vain searchers ! but we need not mourn,
We need not stretch our weary wings ;
Thou meetest us, where'er we turn,
Thou beamest, Lord, from all bright things.

The glory no man may abide
Doth visit us, a gracious guest,
Thou, whom "excess of light" doth hide,
Here shonest sweetly manifest.

But sweetest dost Thou, Lord, appear
In the dear Saviour's smiling face ;
The Heavenly Majesty draws near
And offers us its soft embrace.

To us, vain searchers after God,
To us the Holy Ghost doth come :

NOT FOR NOUGHT.

Do and suffer nought in vain :

Let no trifling be :

If the salt of life is pain,

Let e'en wrongs bring good to thee ;

Good to others, few or many ;

Good to all or good to any.

If men curse thee, plant their lies

Where, for truth, they best may grow ;
Let the railers make thee wise,

Preaching peace, where'er thou go :

God no useless plant hath planted,

Evil (wisely used) is wanted.

If the nation-feeding corn

Thriveth under icéd snow ;
If the small bird, on the thorn,

Useth well its guarded sloe ;

Bid thy cares thy comforts double ;

Gather fruit from thorns of trouble.

See the Rivers ! how they run,

Strong in gloom, and strong in light !
Like the never-wearied sun,

Through the day and through the night,
Each along his path of duty,
Turning coldness into beauty !

EBENEZER ELLIOTT. — 1781-1845.

FAITH.

YE who think the truth ye sow
Lost beneath the winter's snow,
Doubt not, Time's unerring law
Yet shall bring the genial thaw.

God in nature ye can trust,—
Is the God of mind less just ?

Read we not the mighty thought
Once by ancient sages taught ?
Though it withered in the blight
Of the mediæval night,

Now the harvest we behold ;
See ! it bears a thousand fold.

Workers on the barren soil,
Yours may seem a thankless toil ;
Sick at heart with hope deferred,
Listen to the cheering word :
Now the faithful sower grieves ;
Soon he'll bind his golden sheaves.

If Great Wisdom have decreed
Man may labor, yet the seed
Never in this life shall grow,
Shall the sower cease to sow ?
The fairest fruit may yet be born
On the resurrection morn !

FRIITZ AND LEOLETT.

From us Thou hidest Thine abode,
But Thou wilt make our souls Thy home.

O Glory that no eye may bear ! —
O Presence Bright, our soul's sweet Guest !
O farthest off, O ever near !
Most Hidden and Most Manifest !

T. H. GILL.

THE FUTURE LIFE.

How shall I know thee in the sphere which keeps
The disembodied spirits of the dead,
When all of thee that time could wither sleeps
And perishes among the dust we tread ?

For I shall feel the sting of ceaseless pain
If there I meet thy gentle presence not ;
Nor hear the voice I love, nor read again
In thy serenest eyes the tender thought.

Will not thy own meek heart demand me there ?
That heart whose fondest throbs to me were given ?
My name on earth was ever in thy prayer,
Shall it be banished from thy tongue in heaven ?

In meadows fanned by heaven's life-breathing wind,
In the resplendence of that glorious sphere,

And larger movements of the unfettered mind,
Wilt thou forget the love that joined us here ?

The love that lived through all the stormy past,
And meekly with my harsher nature bore,
And deeper grew, and tenderer to the last,—
Shall it expire with life, and be no more ?

A happier lot than mine, and larger light
Await thee there ; for thou hast bowed thy will
In cheerful homage to the rule of right,
And lovest all, and renderest good for ill.

For me, the sordid cares in which I dwell,
Shrink and consume my heart, as heat the scroll ;
And wrath has left its scar — that fire of hell
Has left its frightful scar upon my soul.

Yet though thou wear'st the glory of the sky,
Wilt thou not keep the same belovéd name,
The same fair thoughtful brow, and gentle eye,
Lovelier in heaven's sweet climate, yet the same ?

Shalt thou not teach me, in that calmer home,
The wisdom that I learned so ill in this —
The wisdom which is love — till I become
Thy fit companion in the world of bliss ?

WILLIAM C. BRYANT.

A SIGHT OF HEAVEN IN SICKNESS.

OFT have I sat in secret sighs
To feel my flesh decay,
Then groaned aloud with frighted eyes
To view the tottering clay.

But I forbid my sorrows now,
Nor dares the flesh complain ;
Diseases bring their profit too ;
The joy o'ercomes the pain.

My cheerful soul now all the day
Sits waiting here and sings ;
Looks through the ruin of her clay,
And practises her wings.

Faith almost changes into sight
While from afar she spies
Her fair inheritance, in light
Above created skies.

Had but the prison walls been strong
And firm, without a flaw,
In darkness she had dwelt too long,
And less of glory saw.

But now the everlasting hills
Through every chink appear,

And something of the joy she feels
While she's a prisoner here.

The shines of heaven rush sweetly in
At all the gaping flaws,
Visions of endless bliss are seen,
And native air she draws.

O may these walls stand tottering still,
The breaches never close,
If I must here in darkness dwell,
And all this glory lose !

Or rather let this flesh decay,
The ruins wider grow,
Till, glad to see the enlargéd way,
I stretch my pinions through.

ISAAC WATTS. — 1674-1748.

FOR HELP IN TROUBLE.

LOWLY and solemn be
Thy children's cry to Thee,
Father divine !
A hymn of suppliant breath,
Owning that life and death
Alike are Thine !

O Father ! in that hour
When earth all succoring power
Shall disavow ;
When spear, and shield, and crown,
In faintness are cast down,—
Sustain us, Thou !

By Him who bowed to take
The death-cup for our sake,
The thorn, the rod ;
From whom the last dismay
Was not to pass away,—
Aid us, O God !

Tremblers beside the grave,
We call on Thee to save,
Father divine !
Hear, hear our suppliant breath,
Keep us in life and death,
Thine, only Thine !

THE LORD'S CHASTENING.

"Whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth."

WISH not, dear friends, my pain away,—
Wish me a wise and thankful heart,
With God, in all my griefs, to stay,
Nor from His loved correction start.

The dearest offering He can crave
His portion in our souls to prove,
What is it to the gift He gave,
The only Son of His dear love ?

But we, like vexed unquiet sprites,
Will still be hovering o'er the tomb,
Where buried lie our vain delights,
Nor sweetly take a sinner's doom.

In Life's long sickness evermore
Our thoughts are tossing to and fro :
We change our posture o'er and o'er,
But cannot rest, nor cheat our woe.

Were it not better to lie still,
Let Him strike home, and bless the rod,
Never so safe as when our will
Yields undiscerned by all but God ?

Thy precious things, whate'er they be
That haunt and vex thee, heart and brain,
Look at the Cross, and thou shalt see
How thou mayst turn them all to gain !

Lovest thou praise ? the Cross is shame :
Or ease ? the Cross is bitter grief :
More pangs than tongue or heart can frame
Were suffered there without relief.

We of that altar would partake,
But cannot quit the cost — no throne
Is ours, to leave for Thy dear sake —
We cannot do as Thou hast done.

We cannot part with Heaven for Thee —
Yet guide us in Thy track of love :
Let us gaze on where light should be,
Though not a beam the clouds remove.

So wanderers ever fond and true
Look homeward through the evening sky,
Without a streak of Heaven's soft blue
To aid Affection's dreaming eye.

The wanderer seeks his native bower,
And we will look and long for Thee,
And thank Thee for each trying hour,
Wishing, not struggling, to be free.

KEBLE.

LIGHT AMID DARKNESS.

* But unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise, with healing in His wings."

SOMETIMES a light surprises
The Christian as he sings;
It is the Lord who rises
With healing on His wings :

When comforts are declining,
He grants the soul again
A season of clear shining
To cheer it after rain.

In holy contemplation
We sweetly then pursue
The theme of God's salvation,
And find it ever new ;
Set free from present sorrow,
We cheerfully can stay,
E'en let the unknown tomorrow
Bring with it what it may.

It can bring with it nothing
But He will bear us through ;
Who gives the lilies clothing
Will clothe His people too.
Beneath the spreading heavens
No creature but is fed ;
And He, who feeds the ravens,
Will give His children bread.

Though vine nor fig-tree neither
Their wonted fruit should bear, —
Though all the field should wither,
Nor flocks nor herds be there ; —
Yet God the same abiding,
His praise shall tune my voice ;
For, while in Him confiding,
I cannot but rejoice.

Wm. COWPER.

PRACTICAL DEVOTION.

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."

FATHER of our feeble race !

Wise, beneficent and kind !

Spread o'er nature's ample face,

Flows Thy goodness unconfined.

Musing in the silent grove,

Or the busy walks of men,

Still we trace Thy wondrous love,

Claiming large returns again.

Lord ! what offering shall we bring

At Thy altar when we bow ?

Hearts, — the pure, unsullied spring

Whence the kind affections flow !

Soft Compassion's feeling soul,

By the melting eye expressed !

Sympathy, at whose control,

Sorrow leaves the wounded breast ! —

Willing hands to lead the blind,

Bind the wounded, feed the poor ! —

Love, embracing all our kind !

Charity, with liberal store !

Teach us, O Thou Heavenly King !

Thus to show our grateful mind ;

Thus th' accepted offering bring, —

Love to Thee and all mankind !

JANE TAYLOR.

GRACE AND GRATITUDE.

LORD ! come too many gifts from Thee
For us to mark each gift ?
Down streams Thy grace too plenteously
Our spirits up to lift ?

Thy light would glorify our lot ;
Thyself besets our way :
And yet Thine ingrates feel Thee not,
And yet Thy pilgrims stray.

Still sometimes glorious grows the road,
And grateful raptures come ;
All close and tender feels our God,—
All near appears our home.

Some sweet surprise our souls doth take
Straight to the heavenly Throne :—
Some sudden blaze of bliss doth make
The Lord's bright Presence known.

Or midst some mighty woe awhile
Our gracious God appears,
And strangely beams th' Eternal Smile
Amid the mortal tears.

Alas these visits rare and rude
Unto Thy Holy Place !—

Our weak, wild bursts of gratitude —
Thy calm, clear deeps of grace !

O never shall Thy mercy make
Our souls to rest in Thine ?
Nor mortal gratitude partake
The flow of Grace Divine ?

When shall our grateful raptures rise
Fast as Thy grace descends,
And link to endless harmonies
The Love that never ends !

T. H. GILL.

THE SOUL'S RELIANCE.

INTERVAL of grateful shade,
Welcome to my weary head !
Welcome slumbers to my eyes,
Tired with glaring vanities !
My great Master still allows
Needful periods of Repose :
By my Heavenly Father blest
Thus I give my powers to rest.

Heavenly Father ! gracious name !
Night and Day His love the same :
Far be each suspicious thought,
Every anxious care forgot :

Thou, my ever bounteous God,
Crown'st my days with various good :
Thy kind eye, that cannot sleep,
These defenceless hours shall keep.

What if death my sleep invade ?
Should I be of death afraid ?
Whilst encircled by Thy arm,
Death may strike but cannot harm.
With Thy heavenly presence blest,
Death is life, and labor rest.
Welcome sleep or death to me,
Still secure, if still with Thee.

PHILIP DODDRIDGE. — 1702-1751.

UPWARD TENDENCIES OF THE SOUL.

FROM the birth
Of mortal man, the sovereign Maker said,
That not in humble nor in brief delight,
Not in the fading echoes of Renown,
Power's purple robes, nor Pleasure's flowery lap,
The soul should find enjoyment : but from these
Turning disdainful to an equal good,
Through all the ascent of things enlarge her view,
Till every bound at length should disappear,
And infinite perfection close the scene.

AKENSIDE. — 1721-1770.

THE RAINBOW.

SWEET Dove ! the softest steadiest plume
In all the sunbright sky,
Brightening in every changing gloom,
As breezes change on high ;—

Sweet Leaf ! the pledge of peace and mirth
“ Long sought and lately won,”
Blest increase of reviving Earth
When first it felt the sun ;—

Sweet Rainbow ! pride of summer days,
High set at Heaven’s command,
Though into drear and dusky haze
Thou melt on either hand ;—

Dear tokens of a pardoning God,
We hail you, one and all,
As when our fathers walked abroad,
Freed from their twelve-months’ thrall !

Lord ! if our fathers turned to Thee
With such adoring gaze,
Wondering frail men Thy light should see
Without Thy scorching blaze ;—

Where is our love and where our hearts
We who have seen Thy Son,

Have tried Thy Spirit's winning arts,
And yet we are not won ?

The Son of God in radiance beamed
Too bright for us to scan ;
But we may face the rays that streamed
From the mild Son of Man.

There, parted into rainbow hues
In sweet harmonious strife,
We see celestial Love diffuse
Its light o'er Jesus' life.

God by His bow vouchsafed to write
This truth in heaven above :
As every lovely hue is Light,
So every grace is Love.

KEBLE.

WISDOM AND LOVE.

God is love : His mercy brightens
All the path in which we rovè :
Bliss He wakes, and woe He lightens ;
God is wisdom, God is love.

Chance and change are busy ever ;
Man decays, and ages move ;
But His mercy waneth never,
God is wisdom, God is love.

Even the hour that darkest seemeth
Will his changeless goodness prove ;
From the mist His brightness streameth,
God is wisdom, God is love.

He with earthly cares entwineth
Hope and comfort from above .
Everywhere His glory shineth ;
God is wisdom, God is love.

BOWRING.

TO NIGHT.

MYSTERIOUS night ! when our first parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue ?
Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of heaven came,
And, lo ! creation widened in man's view.
Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O sun ? or who could find,
Whilst fly, and leaf, and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind ?
Why do we, then, shun death with anxious strife ?
If light can thus deceive, wherefore not life ?

J. BLANCO WHITE.

LOOKING TO JESUS.

THOU, to our woe who down didst come,
Who one with us wouldst be,
Wilt lift us to Thy Heavenly home,
Wilt make us one with Thee.

Our earthly garments Thou hast worn,
And we Thy robes shall wear !
Our mortal burdens Thou hast borne,
And we Thy bliss may bear !

O mighty grace, our life to live,
To make our earth divine ;
O mighty grace ! Thy Heaven to give,
And lift our Life to Thine !

O strange the gifts and marvellous,
By Thee received and given !
Thou tookest woe and death from us,
And we receive Thy Heaven !

T. H. GILL.

The Saviour of All.

We trust in the living God who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.—*1 Timothy*, iv. 10.

“SAVIOUR of all”—on that we lean—
Who shall our trust gainsay?
What earth-born cloud shall intervene
To hide that heavenly ray?

Not to this life, redeeming grace
Is partially confined;
It knoweth neither time nor place,
And visits every mind.

The Saviour is a Saviour still
Through being’s endless scope;
Winning the soul from woe and ill,
Never withholding hope.

And though the present aye must be
The true, th' accepted hour,
We cannot from His mercy flee,
His sin-subduing power.

Then in the living God we'll trust,
Who doeth all things well;
The body shall return to dust,
The soul in heaven shall dwell.









08
109

